

Turkey seeking more Israeli weapons

TEL AVIV (AFP) — Turkey is seeking large-scale Israeli involvement in a 150 billion dollar, 25-year plan to strengthen its military, a Turkish official said in an interview published here on Monday.

Sitki Orun, a retired general who is an adviser to the state Turkish armed forces foundation, told the Jerusalem Post newspaper that Israeli contractors were needed to help carry out the military buildup, notably due to reticence in the United States and Europe to selling large quantities of weapons to Ankara.

Mr. Orun specifically mentioned a Belgian decision earlier this month to cancel a planned weapons sale to Ankara and said Washington was hesitating to grant an export license for Super Cobra attack helicopters to Turkey.

Foreign governments have expressed concern over alleged human rights violations linked to the Turkish government's campaign against separatist Kurds and over rising tension with Cyprus.

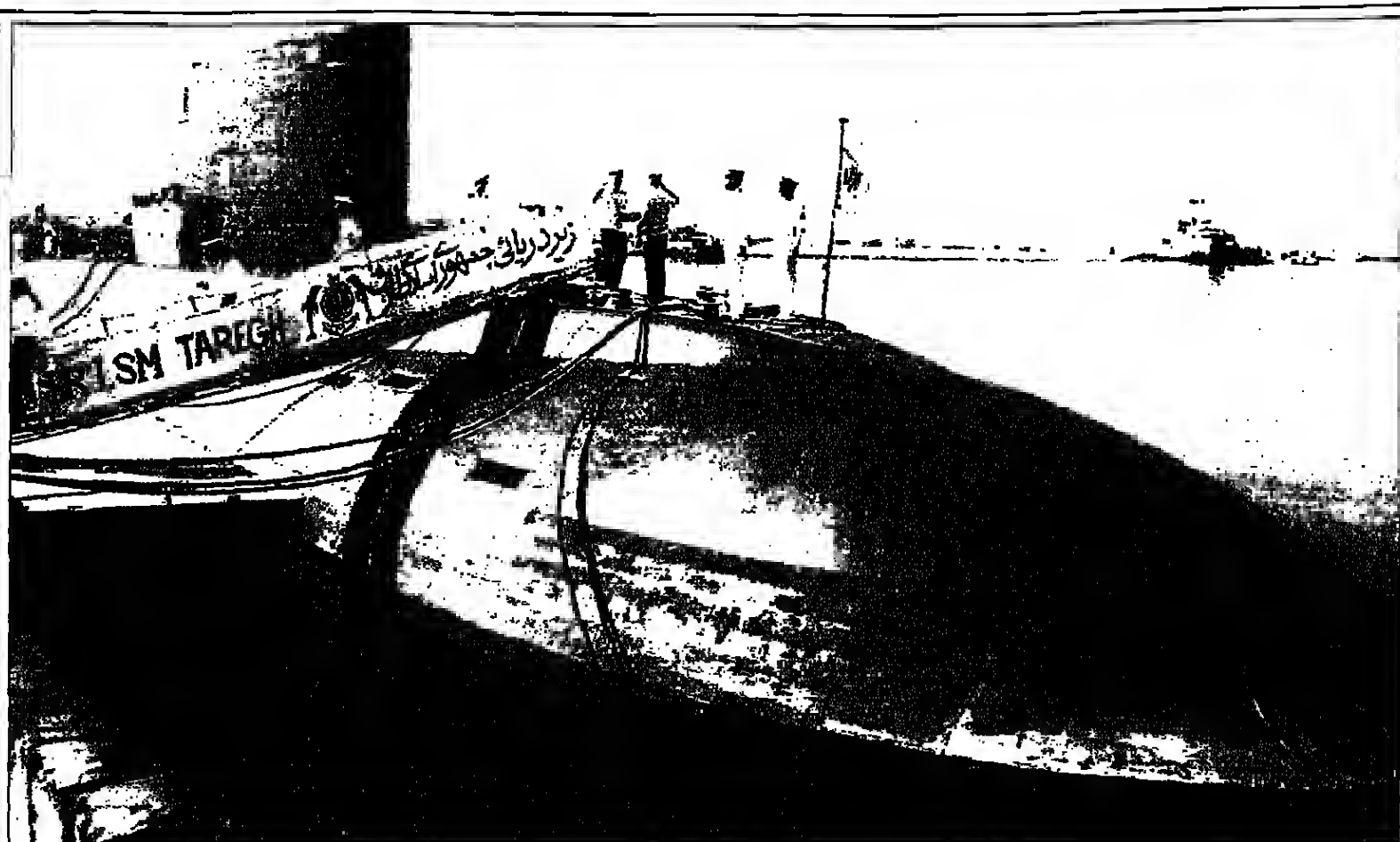
"These types of developments are to the benefit of Israel," Mr. Orun said. "If Belgium does not give us the weapons, we'll buy them somewhere else."

Turkey is especially interested in looking at Israel's Merkava tank as a possible co-production partner for its programme to produce 800 battle tanks in a deal estimated to be worth some \$3.2 billion, he said.

Mr. Orun told the newspaper he was to meet Monday and Tuesday with Israeli firms which could participate in a defence and aviation fair run by the Armed Forces Foundation, the government defence holding company.

Israel and Turkey signed a major military cooperation agreement in 1995 involving cooperation in arms development and training.

Despite initial opposition to the agreement within the Islamic-dominated government which came to power in Ankara last June, Prime Minister Necmettin Erbakan last month approved one of its key elements, a \$600 million deal under which Israel will upgrade 54 Turkish warplanes.



IRANIAN SUB: This picture undated shows the Russian-made submarine 'Tareh' belonging to the Iranian navy. Iran said last week it had deployed its third Russian-made submarine, prompting fears among its neighbours and their Western allies that they would threaten oil shipping in the Gulf. But the commander of Iran's ground forces, General Ahmad Dabbin, told official newspapers that the submarines are not a threat to any country and Iran will only use them for defensive purposes (AFP photo)

Iraq lives on smuggling through north

ZAKHO (AFP) — On winding mountain roads in Kurdistan, trucks carrying smuggled Iraqi oil drive north to Turkey as others head into Iraq with food and goods like cement and steel which are banned under U.N. sanctions.

The contraband is not only delivered to markets in government-held areas of Iraq but also to those in Iran, while Kurdish factions which control northern Iraq tax the trade to raise funds for their autonomous institutions.

The smuggling through Kurdistan, where the Iraqi government withdrew following a 1991 Kurdish revolt, has kept Iraq afloat since crippling U.N. sanctions were imposed after its 1990 invasion of Kuwait.

Cypriot activists block British military exercises

NICOSIA (Agencies) — Cypriot environmentalists blocked British military exercises on Monday by scattering into woods on the island's remote Akamas peninsula, police and witnesses said.

"We are trying to remove the activists from the firing range for their own protection," a police spokesman said. "It is not our intention to clash with them."

Around 15 local activists spent the night camped on the northwestern peninsula to protest against live-firing exercises scheduled to start on Monday.

A police helicopter started searching the firing

range for activists who dispersed into the woods when anti-riot police appeared on the scene. Some activists were detained and escorted away by police, who were still looking for the remainder, witnesses said.

In the meantime, 35 soldiers from the British base of Episkopi on the island's southern coast arrived in Akamas to start their exercises.

The infantry training, in which live ammunition was to be used, ends on Friday.

"It is our intention that the exercises go ahead," said Mervyn Wynne-Jones, a spokesman for the British bases in Cyprus.

Soldiers from two military bases which Britain has retained on the island since independence in 1960 are allowed to train in the Akamas for up to 70 days a year.

Local and international bodies have called on the peninsula to be declared a national park. The bases argue their exercise protect the environment by keeping developers at bay.

Last week a parliamentary committee issued a report urging the government to take measures to stop the military exercises.

Spokesman Wynne-Jones said later Monday

that 12 demonstrators were briefly taken into custody but no charges were filed. A Cypriot police spokesman said the protesters had been detained for their own safety.

Mr. Wynne-Jones said all British soldiers taking part in the exercises had been told "they must take care of the environment."

A 1996 study by the World Bank on the development of the wider Akamas peninsula region proposed declaring the Akamas forest as a nature reserve park, stressing the need to protect its environmental uniqueness.

blocks and steel girders in violation of the embargo. Turkish-made satellite dishes can be bought for \$2,500 in Kurdistan.

Some trucks with Turkish licence plates cross the checkpoint at Faldia, between Dohuk and Mosul, to enter Iraqi government-held areas.

"We even saw them bring in marble for the palaces of Saddam Hussein," a humanitarian worker said. Shipments of American cigarettes meanwhile are delivered to Iraq, with some sent back immediately to Turkey after they are taxed as re-exports.

But most of the cigarettes are sent on to Iran, according to a Westerner who has lived in the region for years.

Albright will change tough style — Saudi paper

RIYADH (AFP) — New U.S. Secretary of State Madeleine Albright will soften her tough style and choose her words carefully as the top diplomat of the world's superpower, a newspaper said Monday.

"Her job at the U.N. was more an honorary post and a platform, unlike her new duties as head of diplomacy of a superpower where her words will be examined under a magnifying glass."

Al Riyadh said President Bill Clinton chose Ms. Albright as Secretary of State during his second term because she is one to take initiative and says the right thing at the right time.

"It's perhaps the difficult jobs awaiting the American president that led him to choose" Ms. Albright, the daily said. Saudi Arabia is the main U.S. ally in the region, but U.S. officials have accused Saudi authorities of failing to cooperate in the investigation into the June 25 truck bombing which killed 19 U.S. airmen in Dhahran.

Ms. Albright appeared cautious when asked to comment on the issue during her first press conference on Friday, saying the Saudis had been cooperative and that Washington hoped for full cooperation for the rest of the investigation.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Israel calls for trade offensive in Vietnam

TEL AVIV (AFP) — The trade ministry called Monday for a major initiative to boost trade with Vietnam, saying the socialist nation's growing economy held business opportunities worth hundreds of millions of dollars for Israeli firms. Releasing the results of a study into investment opportunities in Vietnam, the ministry's export institute said the volume of Israeli activity in the country could reach \$180 million in the agrotechnology sector, \$160 million in telecommunications and \$300 million in infrastructure. The institute cautions however that bureaucratic red tape, corruption and a chronic shortage of foreign currency remain obstacles to business in Vietnam, which established diplomatic relations with Israel in 1993.

Egypt mufti says Israel visits taboo

CAIRO (R) — Egypt's highest-ranking Islamic official has said visiting Israel is taboo, siding with the Egyptian Coptic Christian pope. "Travelling to Israel for tourism is taboo because it supports the Israeli economy at the expense of Arab and Muslim economies," Mufti Nasr Farid Wasseil said in remarks published in Al Gomhuria newspaper on Monday. The government-owned daily said he was speaking at a religious conference at the Nile Delta city of Tanta. Pope Shenouda III, spiritual leader of the Egyptian Coptic Church, has excommunicated some of his flock for visiting Arab East Jerusalem because it is under Israeli control. The Egyptian government has neither prevented nor encouraged Egyptians who try to visit Jerusalem on pilgrimage but controversial matters of state are normally referred to the mufti for his religious approval.

Expatriates with AIDS deported from Kuwait

KUWAIT CITY (AFP) — Kuwait deported 37 expatriate workers in 1996 who were found to have AIDS when tested by the health authorities, a senior health official said on Monday. The acquired immune deficiency syndrome (AIDS) sufferers were among 916 foreign workers sent home after they were found to be suffering from a range of illnesses including malaria and tuberculosis, head of the public health administration Rashid Abdel Aziz Al Owaish told the daily Al Rai Al Aam. Mr. Owaish said the deported expatriates were among 174,000 foreign workers who arrived in Kuwait in 1996, and who were all obliged to undergo a series of medical tests to become eligible for residence visas. He added that the number of AIDS sufferers deported was lower last year than in 1995.

Iranian illegals seized in southern Japan

TOKYO (AFP) — Japanese police arrested 21 Iranians, Chinese and other Asians on Monday on suspicion of smuggling themselves into Japan by sea. The prefectural police of Nagasaki in southern Japan seized 11 Iranians, three Pakistanis and two Indians, all in their 20s and 30s, a police spokesman said. "The suspects said they were among 25 people who had come to Japan on a fishing boat from the South Korean port of Pusan in order to work here," he said, adding police were searching the rest of them. The Kumamoto prefectural police, meanwhile, arrested five Chinese who did not have passports. They also said there had been more than a dozen people who had come to Japan with them aboard a boat from southern China, a police spokesman said.

Somali businessman claims \$20m from U.N.

NAIROBI (AFP) — A Somali businessman is claiming some \$20 million in rent arrears from the United Nations for using his compound in Mogadishu during the world body's intervention in Somalia, the East African weekly newspaper reported Monday. Abdi Hosh Ashkir, currently a refugee in Kenya, said U.N. troops serving in the United Nations Operation in Somalia (UNOSOM) occupied his compound, near Mogadishu's airport, during their stay there in 1993 and 1994 without compensation. The compound, which the Americans named Hunter Base, contained before Somalia's civil war a hotel, apartments, a dairy farm, an electric power plant and a car assembly line, the East African quoted Ashkir as saying.

Kuwait sends home alleged Saudi smugglers

KUWAIT (R) — Kuwait has foiled an alleged attempt to smuggle illicit drugs by two Saudi Arabian nationals who were handed to the kingdom, a newspaper reported on Monday. Saudi Arabia beheads convicted drug smugglers by the sword in public while neighbouring Kuwait made the offence a capital crime in 1995. "After a violent pursuit in territorial waters, the coast guards arrested two Saudi infiltrators who were trying to smuggle drugs into Kuwait," Al Seyassah daily quoted an Interior Ministry official source as saying. Interior Ministry officials were not immediately available for comment on the newspaper report. Kuwait has not yet joined a Gulf Arab security treaty but the newspaper said the extradition was "in accordance with an agreement signed in this respect."

JORDAN TIMES DAILY GUIDE AND CALENDAR

JORDAN TELEVISION

Tel. 773111-19

PROGRAMME TWO

13:30 Cartoon (Captain Planet)

14:00 French Programme — Sciences Carbone

14:30 Dog House

15:00 Feature Film — "Something for Joe"

16:50 Call for Prayer and Ifar

17:30 You Bet Your Life

18:00 Serie — La Lumiere Des Justes

18:15 Magazine — Extra Large

19:30 News Headlines

19:35 Murphy Brown

20:00 Oriental Rugs

20:30 Encounter

21:10 Lost Civilisations (Documentary)

22:00 News in English

22:25 Islam in a Changing World

23:00 Snowy River

23:30 Mini Series — "Memories of Midnight"

01:05 Ramadan Talks

PRAYER TIMES

05:08 Fajr

06:28 (Sunrise) Duha

11:49 Dhuhur

14:44 Asr

17:09 Maghreb

18:29 Isha

CHURCHES

St. Mary of Nazareth Church

Sweifeh, Tel. 810740

Assemblies of God Church

Tel. 632785

St. Joseph Church Tel. 624590

Church of the Annunciation Tel. 637440

De la Salle Church Tel. 661757

Terra Sancta Church Tel. 622366

Anglican Church Tel. 652826

Armenian Catholic Church Tel. 775261

St. Ephraim Church Tel. 771751

Armenian Orthodox Church Tel. 652526

Evangelical Lutheran Church Tel. 824328

German-speaking Evangelical Congregation Tel. 845457

The Latter-Day Saints Tel. 654932

Church of Nazareth Tel. 675691

The Evangelical Local Church in Amman Tel. 811295

English-speaking Latin Catholics Parish Tel. 614190

WEATHER

Bulletin supplied by the Department of Meteorology

Rainfall is expected in all parts of the Kingdom with cold weather conditions continuing to prevail. Skies will be partly

cloudy and winds northerly moderate. A cold air mass is expected to affect the Kingdom on Thursday. In Aqaba, skies will be partly cloudy, winds northerly moderate, and seas calm.

Amman 04/10

Aqaba 08/17

Deserts 02/11

Jordan Valley 08/15

Yesterday's high temperatures: Amman 10, Aqaba 23 Humidity readings: Amman 99 per cent, Aqaba 28 per cent.

USEFUL TELEPHONE NUMBERS

NIGHT DUTY

AMMAN:

Dr. Khalil Al-Jabali 740740

Dr. Waleed Al Masri 675485

Dr. Yousef Rashid 896301

Dr. Ahmad Manna 839739

Ferdous pharmacy 778336

Al Asema pharmacy 637055

Al Salam pharmacy 636730

Yacoub pharmacy 644945

Shmeisani pharmacy 637660

Nairoukh pharmacy 623672

Najib pharmacy 847632

IRBID:

Dr. Ahmad Qanu 281484

Al Quds pharmacy (-)

ZARQA:

Dr. Waleed Halseh 982799

Khalifeh pharmacy 983417

EMERGENCIES

Food Control Centre 637111

Civil Defence Dept. 661111

Civil Defence Emergency 630341

Rescue Police 192, 621111, 637777

Fire Brigade 617101

Blood Bank 775121

Highway Police 843402

Traffic Police 896390

Public Security Department 630321

Hotel Complaints 605800

Price Complaints 661176

Water and Sewerage Complaints 897467

Amman Municipality Complaints 787111

Telephone Information (directory assistance) 121

Overseas Calls 010230

Central Amman Telephone Repairs 633101

Abdali Telephone Repairs 661101

Jordan Television 773111

Radio Jordan 774111

Water Authority 680100

Jordan Electricity Authority 815615

Electric Power Company 636381

RJ Flight Information 0853200

Queen Alia Intl. Airport 0853200

HOSPITALS

AMMAN:

Hussain Medical Centre 813813/32

Khalidi Maternity 644281/6

Ajdleh Maternity 642441/2

Jabal Amman Maternity 642362

Malhas, J. Amman 636140

Palestine, Shmeisani 607071

Shmeisani Hospital 669131

University Hospital 845845

Al-Masheer Hospital 667227/9

The Islamic, Abdali 666126/37

Al-Ahli, Abdali 664164/6

Italian, Al-Muhajreen 77101/3

Al-Bashir 775111/26

Army, Marita 891611/15

Queen Alia Hospital 602240/50

Amal Hospital 674155

The Arab Centre for Heart and Special Surgery 865199

ZARQA:

Zarqa Govt. Hospital (09)83323

Zarqa National Hospital (09)900560

Ibn Sina Hospital (09)986732

Al Hikma Modern Hospital (09)990990

IRBID:

Princess Basma Hospital (02)275555

Greek Catholic Hospital (02)272725

Ibn Al Nafes Hospital (02)247100

FOR THE TRAVELLER

QUEEN ALIA AIRPORT

ARRIVALS

Royal Jordanian (RJ) Flights

07:15 Sanaa (RJ)

07:25 Damascus (RJ)

09:25 Abu Dhabi (RJ)

10:05 Muscat, Dubai (RJ)

10:05 Beirut (RJ)

10:15 Doha, Bahrain (RJ)

11:30 Jeddah, Aqaba (add) (RJ)

12:15 Jakarta, Abu Dhabi (add) (RJ)

16:20 Cairo (RJ)

17:15 Chicago, Amsterdam (RJ)

17:20 London, Frankfurt (RJ)

18:45 Jakarta, Abu Dhabi (add) (RJ)

20:00 Jeddah (add) (RJ)

02:30 Jeddah (add) (RJ)

Other Flights

07:30 London (KJ)

07:35 Damascus, London (BA)

08:30 Cairo (MS)

15:00 Kiev (6U)

15:45 Munich (YP)

17:40 Rome (AZ)

19:15 Dubai (EK)

22:50 Tel Aviv (LY)

00:40 Beirut, Amsterdam (KL)

01:00 Aden (IY)

01:55 Bucharest (RO)

07:45 Beirut (ME)

Royal Wings (RW) Flights

Princess returns from UAE

AMMAN (J.T.) — HRH Princess Basma Monday concluded a short visit to the United Arab Emirates (UAE) where she met with the General Women's Federation and the Thabian Women's Society President Sheikhah Fatima Bint Mubarak.

Sheikhah Fatima reviewed the current status of women in Jordan and the UAE, their achievements and common future aspirations. They also discussed means of cooperation in the field of voluntary social work and expert exchanges. Princess Basma stressed the need for plans to develop

the role and status of Arab women to better serve their countries. She also briefed Sheikhah Fatima on the duties and activities of Jordanian social foundations, particularly during Ramadan, and the charity campaigns organised by the Queen Alia Fund for Social Development to improve the living conditions of indigent Jordanian families.

Sheikhah Fatima holds religious seminars on Tuesdays, during the holy month of Ramadan, with the participation of several Islamic scholars regarding the social status of women.

Police chief meets with PNA delegation

AMMAN (J.T.) — The Public Security Department (PSD) Police Chief Lieutenant General Nasoub Moheiddin Monday met with a Palestinian National Authority (PNA) police delegation which is currently on a three-day visit to the Kingdom.

The Palestinian team, headed by Palestinian Police Chief Major General Ghazi Jabali, the first to the Kingdom, has arrived for exposure to the Jordanian police experience, the Jordan News Agency, Petra said.

The delegation will also hold talks with other Jordanian PSD officials concerning cooperation and the development of their departments.

Lieut. Gen. Moheiddin told the visiting delegation that Jordan will provide support for the PNA to enable them to fulfil their objectives.

The Jordanian police chief stated that the police force in Jordan has accomplished several advancements in terms of developing its own facilities and using scientific equipment.

"Jordanian police are adapted to new technology and now are a very developed police apparatus," Lieut. Gen. Moheiddin said.

The head of the Palestinian delegation, Maj. Gen. Jabali expressed his appreciation to the Jordanian police.

The visiting delegation was then briefed on PSD duties as well as crime and car accidents in Jordan.

The delegation toured several PSD sections and the anti-narcotics department where they were briefed as to the duties therein.

Muslim Brotherhood reaffirms anti-government stance

AMMAN (J.T.) — An overwhelming majority of the Muslim Brotherhood last Wednesday reaffirmed their resolve not to participate in Prime Minister Abdul Karim Kabariti's government, leaving the final decision to the group's consultative council for endorsement. Al Majd Arabic weekly announced Monday.

This decision was taken at the conclusion of a one-day conference, dedicated to a discussion of the group's position regarding government participation. The meeting was attended by 200 leading figures of

the Muslim Brotherhood and the outcome led to arguments among the group's major wings, Al Majd said.

The weekly attested that participants engaged in a heated debate and were divided on whether the group should or should not participate in the government.

Three prominent leaders Ishaq Farhan, Bassam Umouh and Hamzeb Mansour withdrew from the meeting to protest what they termed a "campaign of libel" and accused other leaders of a lack of "brotherly dialogue."

However, Dr. Abdullah Akailah resolved to stay and participate in the dialogue, presenting a report encouraging group participation in the government.

He faulted the Muslim Brotherhood group for lacking a proper strategy to help implement its programmes.

Deputy Hammam Said, however, presented a report in which he cited legal, judicial and political reasons for his group not to participate in Mr. Kabariti's government, nor any other government which normalises relations with the "Jewish enemy."

Subsequent to a discussion of the two reports, the more headline of the members attacked Dr. Akailah's paper, calling it a "clear deviation from the firm principles agreed upon by the Muslim Brotherhood."

Some members also warned that declining popularity and internal divisions would ensue should a decision be taken to participate in a government which has given preference to relations with "the Jewish enemy" over relations with Arab countries.

Jordan export corporation to intensify promotional activities

AMMAN (J.T.) — The Jordan Export Development and Commercial Centres Corporation (JEDCO) will forge ahead with efforts to improve the quality of Jordanian exports and intensify promotional activities for products through a comprehensive programme JEDCO prepared this year.

While benefiting from past experiences in promoting Jordanian products in traditional markets, the JEDCO programme will also seek non-traditional markets.

It will also participate in specialised international fairs and in organising exhibitions for Jordanian products in foreign markets.

The cooperation also prepared for a July conference regarding the Euro-Mediterranean partnership (Medpartenariat) with the aim of enhancing economic

cooperation between countries of the Mediterranean region and the European Union (EU).

The conference, which will be organised by JEDCO in cooperation with the delegation of the European Commission in Jordan, will bring together representatives from about 150 Jordanian companies and 300 European companies.

JEDCO Director General Mohammad Halaiga told a press conference last month that the meeting will be geared towards setting up joint Jordanian-European ventures and creating a suitable environment for growth of small and medium-size enterprises.

He added that the conference will highlight investment and export opportunities in Jordan as well as incentives brought about by new economic legislation

in Jordan.

The 1997 JEDCO programme includes plans to establish specialised service centres to improve the skills of those working in the industrial sector.

JEDCO is also drawing plans to follow up on and implement new projects for the development of industrial sector.

These plans include a project for the development of food packaging, a project for the development of the traditional and handicrafts industry, the establishment of a packaging and canning unit as well as a project for the establishment of a training centre for the clothing sector.

Technical aid projects will be implemented this year with the objective of assisting Jordanian companies to qualify for ISO 9000.

JEDCO will also implement a risk analysis project for food industries as well as a project for the establishment of a bar-coding centre.

In a bid to establish economic contacts with the industrial and commercial sectors abroad, JEDCO is currently planning to send delegations from the Jordanian industrial sector to these countries in order to study market demand and follow up on economic developments.

Potential markets include the Czech Republic, Romania, Slovakia and Scandinavian countries.

The JEDCO programme is also geared towards participation in international trade fairs in Dubai, Cairo, Damascus, Bosnia, Baghdad, South Africa and United Arab Emirates.

'Jordan enthusiasts' working to actualise national museum

By Tanya Habjouqa
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — The idea to showcase natural treasures and heritage in a national museum struck a group of "Jordan enthusiasts," as Sharifa Hind Nasser, head of the museum planning committee told the Jordan Times.

The primary reaction upon introduction to this idea was astonishment, she affirmed. "A national museum? Why yes, we need one," she cited acquaintances as saying.

After years of dreaming, that vision is finally becoming a reality, in the form of a conceptual plan drafted by visiting American museumologists James Simms and Patrick Rogan.

Mr. Simms, a museumologist and professor at George Washington University, showcased blueprints and sketches of the future museum to eager committee members and other participants last Saturday.

"Jordan has the opportunity to create something new, based on modern museumology," Mr. Simms said.

Though the museum is still in its conceptual phase, a site has been allocated in the heart of downtown

Amman, according to Sharifa Hind.

"Downtown has such energy, I cannot think of any other place where our museum belongs," she said.

The committee members believe the museum will be of "infinite value in teaching Jordan's children their history, humanity, and help instill national pride."

The draft plan visualises two stories surrounded by a public park, with a section of the ground level reserved for school and tour buses.

The museum will be located between the new municipality building and the downtown shopping area, in close proximity to the Roman Amphitheatre.

"This will definitely upgrade the area and downtown businesses will benefit on a socio-economic level," Sharifa Hind asserted.

"This vision is a Jordanian vision, we simply helped the committee to articulate it," Mr. Simms stated as he laid out the blueprints.

The museum boasts an auditorium, with a capacity of 800 persons, courtyards for demonstrations and performances and a modern approach to showcasing the exhibits, he said.

One aspect which might appeal to museum visitors

would be the audio-visual excursion through Jordanian history in a real Hijaz train car.

However, the discovery courtyard will be the "big wow" of the museum, according to Mr. Simms.

Placed in the centre of the museum, it appears to be the site of an archaeological dig uncovering ancient artefacts.

"As in a dream vision, you might be peering at the artefacts and suddenly stumble upon a reconstructed Nabatean house," Mr. Simms said.

Exhibit plans include a chronicle of the Hashemite family, geographical and natural history, a clothing display through the ages, food, tools, shelter and family life, as well as rotating exhibits.

While the project is still in its preliminary stage and the land procured, the actual construction depends on a loan from a Japanese group.

"We do not know who will sign [for the estimated \$20 million loan] yet, but since the municipality has offered the land we are hoping Mayor [Mamdouh] Abadi will, and without him we would not have come this far," said Sharifa Hind.

"This museum is essential

for the preservation of our history and culture," she added.

The tourism sector might also benefit from such an enterprise, according to committee members.

"The museum might become a flagship for tourism, drawing tourists to Amman," Mr. Simms said.

The ministries of planning, tourism and the municipality are all involved in some aspect of the plan.

"If all goes well, the museum will be functioning within five years," Mr. Simms said.

The current conceptual plan took years of consultation with archaeology, anthropology, geology and art history experts.

"Prince Hassan bestowed on our committee the credibility to contact such international institutions as the Louvre and the British Museum for help," Sharifa Hind stated.

Plans also call for the training of a competent, knowledgeable local staff, as well as instituting special programmes for children.

"This museum is not just for exhibitions, but will be a centre for scholarships and for housing our national treasures," Sharifa Hind said.

Tabloid editor detained on slander charges

By Rana Hussein
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — A weekly tabloid editor, who was detained on Thursday on charges of slandering a Jordanian deputy and a minister, was released on bail Sunday, according to his attorney, Habes Shboul.

Amman Prosecutor Jamal Zougby ordered the arrest of Editor-in-Chief of the satirical weekly "Abed Rabbo" Omar Nadi after complaints were filed by Minister of Public Works and Housing Abdul Hadi Majali and Islamist Deputy Ibrahim Zeid Kilani.

"The Appellate Court accepted the second request to free my client, stating that his release is neither a threat to national unity nor does it interfere with the course of investigations," Mr. Shboul said.

Charges pressed against Mr. Nadi include: overlooking objectivity, honesty and accuracy; reporting and publishing inaccurate news; and slandering and tarnishing another person's image and dignity.

The minister and deputy filed complaints against Mr. Nadi following the last two issues of the newspaper which described Deputy Kilani as a

hypocrite and accused Mr. Majali of stealing cars, the prosecutor said.

According to Mr. Shboul, Mr. Nadi, who was released on a JD 400 bail, is expected to appear at the Amman Court of First Instance in the next few weeks following the conclusion of investigations.

In other developments in the case, officials Monday said they were looking for Editor-in-Chief of "Abed Rabbo" Yousef Gheishan for questioning.

"Mr. Gheishan's name came up when we questioned Mr. Nadi and we would like to ask him few questions," Prosecutor Zougby said.

But, according to Mr. Gheishan, who spoke to the Jordan Times on Sunday, the authorities are looking to arrest him.

"I think that I am wanted on the same charges although I am not in charge of what was printed in the newspaper," Mr. Gheishan said.

In a related development the Jordan Press Association (JPA) Council Monday issued a statement expressing its dismay over some weekly tabloid newspapers which, the union said, are "tarnishing our culture, values and traditions." (see text inset)

"These newspapers are abusing press freedoms in a scandalous manner," the statement said.

The union threatened tough sanctions against journalists who do not abide by press ethics, stressing that violators will be referred to the JPA disciplinary council which could result in their permanent expulsion from the union.

During a parliamentary session last week, several deputies expressed dismay over articles appearing in tabloid newspapers, describing them as indecent and unethical in their approach.

The deputies argued that some of these tabloids were publishing details of marital affairs and homosexuality, stressing that the House was extremely offended by such publications.

In response to deputy complaints, Prime Minister Abdul Karim Kabariti said the government would take action to terminate "indecent, obscene and unacceptable" articles in local publications.

The Jordan Press Association (JPA) Council Monday issued a statement expressing dismay over weekly tabloids which, it said, abuse press freedoms.

This is the text of the statement as quoted by Jordan News Agency, Petra:

In spite of the respect we hold for the pioneering role of some weekly tabloids, which benefit from press freedoms in line with the Jordanian constitution and laws, there are some tabloids which have abused this freedom in a scandalous manner paying no attention to the press code of honour, approved by the JPA Council in April of last year.

That which causes us fear is the

possibility that such violations might lead to the adoption of new regulations and legislation by the government which, in turn, might restrict such freedoms in the Kingdom which we consider as sacred and democratic gains.

We are sure that laws limiting press freedoms will not be restricted merely to weekly tabloids, but rather they will be extended to all the press, thereby granting the executive authority the right to control, supervise, close down the newspapers in question or withdraw their licences or any other action considered a setback.

We hereby ask our colleagues and chief editors not to tarnish our culture, values and tradition.

Those who do not abide by press

ethics and morals in terminating indecent, obscene and unacceptable articles will be referred to the JPA disciplinary council and perhaps permanently expelled from the association.

We call on our colleagues, editors and publishers to consider this a personal appeal to free themselves from anything which is incompatible with the ethics of journalism and its sacred message.

We call on the Parliament and government to allocate time for reorganisation.

We caution against any amendment to the Press and Publications Law, stressing that any amendment should be within the context of safeguarding national press gains.

What's Going On

CONCERT

* Performance by artists from Ajloun governorate at the Royal Cultural Centre at 8:00 p.m.

EXHIBITIONS

* Ramdaniat exhibition from Wadi Dana Nature Reserve (silver nature jewelry, jams, dried fruits) and Jordan River Designs (JRD) ornaments (tablecloths, candles, embroidered accessories) at JRD showroom, Jabal Amman, First

Circle (Tel. 613081), until Feb. 10.
* Exhibition on the "Institute of the Arab World in Paris" at the French Cultural Centre, until Feb. 6.
* Paintings by Muhammad Ali Shaker at the Orient Gallery, Issam Ajlouni Street, Shmeisani, until Jan. 30.
* Photographic exhibition on the life of the Founder of Pakistan at Qasid-Azam Hall, Embassy of Pakistan, Jabal Weibdeh (Tel. 622787, 624680), until January 31.
* Works by Jordanian artists at the Royal Cultural Centre, until Jan. 30.

Russia confirms its initiative

(Continued from page 1)

Syria to the negotiation table.

The Russian initiative "had been planned some time ago," he said the ambassador, but "its timing is also related to the recent signing of the Hebron agreement," which partially dissolved the logjam in the peace negotiations, and gave hope that "the peace process can be pushed forward on both the bilateral

and the multilateral tracks."

Saying that the participants in the peace process expressed their "eagerness to see an increased Russian role" in the multilateral phase of the peace negotiations, Mr. Sultanov also declared that Russia is in a privileged position to mediate among all parties, as it enjoys "good relations with all parties" directly involved, both the Arab states and Israel.

Israelis raze more homes

(Continued from page 1)

today, the alternative site is much better," he told.

"We are hoping that the remaining 15 families will move by themselves," he said, although he added that police would continue the forced relocations if necessary.

The Jahalin were offered land near Abu Dis, but leaders of the tribe rejected the offer, saying the rocky site is too close to the city garbage dump.

Li Lerner said the tribe's belongings would be

moved to the site, which has been supplied with water and electricity.

Linda Breyer, who represented the bedouin in their court battle, said the tribe's living conditions at the new site would be "abominable."

"We are now going to see a real tiny shanty slum," she said.

The Jahalin, who number about 2,000 in the Maale Adumim area, are among tens of thousands of bedouin living in Israeli-controlled areas.

Arafat due here today

(Continued from page 1)

minister in the PNA.

He said Mr. Arafat would leave on Feb. 21, but did not specify how long the trip would last.

The tour will also take Mr. Arafat to Houston and Los Angeles at the invitations of former Secretary of State James Baker and Edward Djerejian, a veteran diplomat who once served as ambassador to Israel, Mr. Shaath said.

"This visit is very important after the Hebron agreement, in which the United States played an active role," Mr. Shaath said.

Mr. Clinton announced

during the final stages of the Hebron negotiations that he had invited both Mr. Arafat and Mr. Netanyahu to Washington, but no dates for the visits were set.

Israel Radio has reported that Mr. Netanyahu would travel to Washington in about two weeks, but this has not been officially confirmed.

Mr. Shaath announced Mr. Arafat's travel plans after signing an agreement with the U.S. Agency for International Development providing \$3 million in assistance to the Palestinian Justice Ministry.

Arafat holds back declaring state

(Continued from page 1)

not bound to anything in it.

Last week, Mr. Netanyahu said he had a contingency plan should Mr. Arafat declare statehood unilaterally. Israeli media reports said that in such a case, Israel apparently planned to reoccupy West Bank rural areas, leaving Mr. Arafat only with control over seven West Bank cities.

Mr. Arafat, speaking to retired Israeli army generals at his Gaza city headquarters Sunday, said he would not move unilaterally.

Preparing for the final status talks, Likud Knesset faction chief Michael Eitan and labour's Yossi Beilin had been meeting for 13 weeks to try and reach agreement on basic positions.

On Sunday, the two presented their joint document.

"The Likud has given up the dream of an undivided land of Israel, while we in Labour have given up the dream of rolling back the settlements," Mr. Beilin said.

About 145,000 Israelis live on settlements in the West Bank and Gaza Strip.

The document, which is expected to get the support of the vast majority of labour members and a substantial number of Likud members, was submitted to Mr. Netanyahu and President Ezer Weizman. Several members of the committee that negotiated it.

Mr. Beilin and Mr. Eitan said a national consensus would help Israel get the best deal in the final status talks.

The parties agreed that Israel should annex settlements close to the pre-1967 border with the West Bank so that most settlers can stay in their homes, under Israeli sovereignty, on land that is not disconnected from the rest of Israel. Outlying settlements would not be annexed, but residents would be Israeli citizens with "special, agreed upon arrangements."

The document allows the Palestinian entity a strong

police, but no army. It also denies it the right to ally with countries threatening Israel.

On the Palestinian demand for an independent state, Labour — which accepts the idea — and Likud could not fully agree. Therefore, "enlarged autonomy" and statehood are mentioned as valid "options" on what to call the Palestinian entity.

It rejects the Palestinians' demand that Arafat East Jerusalem become their capital. Palestinians living in the city would be allowed far-reaching municipal autonomy, with special arrangements made for controlling the city's Muslim and Christian holy sites.

An Arafat aide meanwhile blasted Israeli plans to tighten its grip on Arab East Jerusalem, accusing the Jewish state of trying to preempt negotiations on the fate of the Holy City.

Israel's ministerial committee on Jerusalem, headed by Mr. Netanyahu, decided on Sunday to allocate \$39 million to improve infrastructure in East Jerusalem in a move it said was to strengthen Israeli sovereignty there.

Levy to head talks

Israeli Foreign Minister David Levy will head Israel's negotiating team with the Palestinians, taking over from former army Chief of Staff Dan Shomron who resigned, Israeli public radio said Monday.

Mr. Netanyahu selected Mr. Levy to replace General Shomron who recently quit "for personal reasons."

He has also asked lawyer Yitzhak Molkho to continue his role in the talks on the final status of the Palestinian territories scheduled to begin in March and to end by May 1999. Mr. Netanyahu assigned Defence Minister Yitzhak Mordechai to conduct negotiations on security matters with Syria if the talks resume, the radio added.

Compromise on the table as N. Ireland talks resume

RELEASED: A spokesman for the Irish government said today that the British and Irish governments are in talks about a possible compromise on the table as the talks resume.

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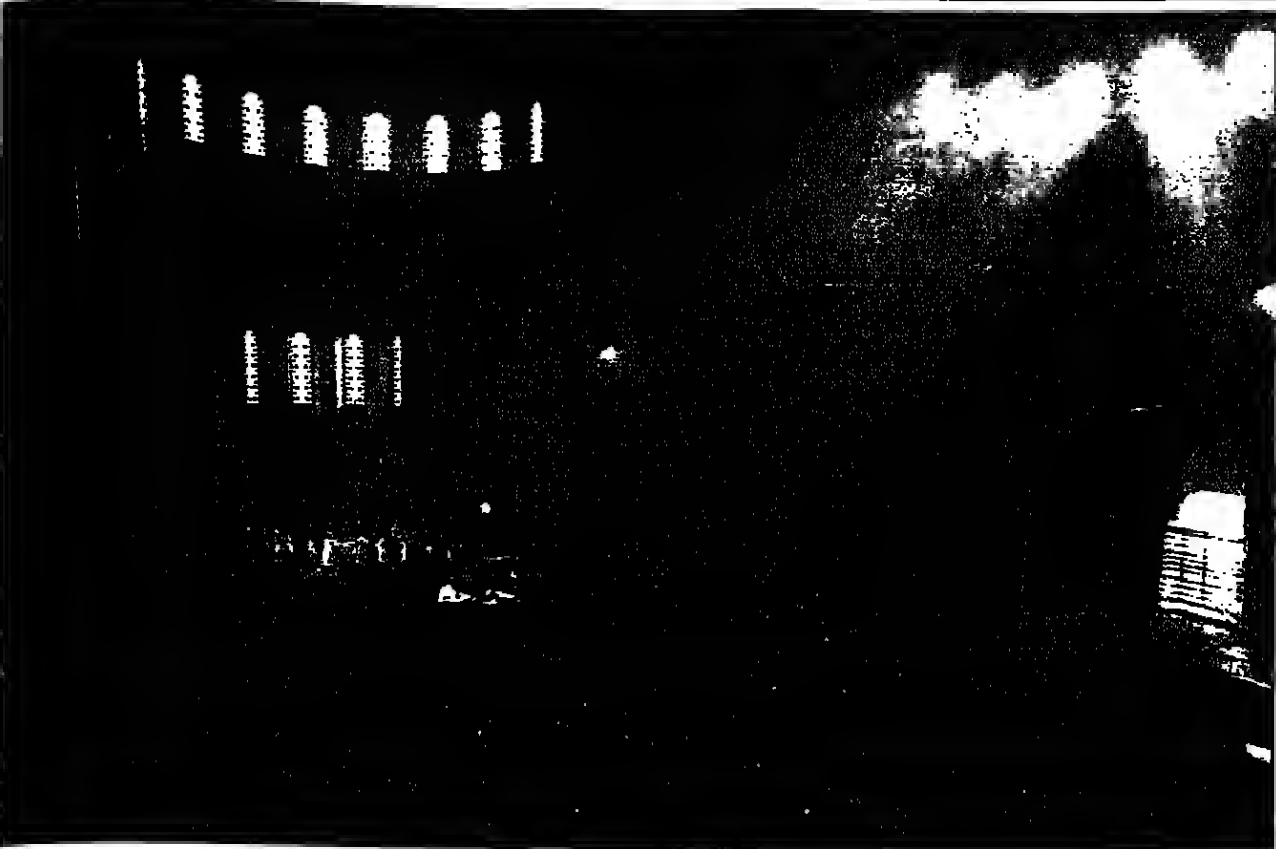
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People attend a mass in St. Sava Temple in the centre of the Yugoslav capital, Belgrade, Sunday. More than 300,000 people marched through city to the Temple of St. Sava, patron saint of education, on whose holy day the ceremony was held. The march was called by the powerful Serbian Orthodox Church, which is now siding with the demonstrators in their protests against election fraud (Reuters photo)

Hundreds of thousands join church march in Serbia

BELGRADE (R) — More than 300,000 people filed solemnly through central Belgrade Monday in a march called by the powerful Serbian Orthodox Church, which is now siding with demonstrators in their protests against election fraud.

Witnesses said the march was the biggest since half a million people turned out on Orthodox New Year's Eve two weeks ago and showed support still ran strong for the pro-democracy movement after more than two months of protests.

Earlier, police withdrew a cordon blocking student pro-democracy demonstrators who had held a non-stop rally for eight days in a test of will with the authorities.

Patriarch Pavle, who is in his 80s, led the church procession flanked by about 20 priests chanting Orthodox hymns and carrying a banner of Saint Sava, patron saint of education, on whose holy day the march was held.

The witnesses said the march, which swelled rapidly in size, began at 7:30 a.m. (0630 GMT) at the Serbian Orthodox cathedral and made its way quietly through sunny, early morning streets to the Saint Sava Temple about 3 kilometres away.

Patriarch Pavle and the other priests celebrated mass for a crowd that continued to grow, jamming the church and the streets outside.

Police, who have clubbed demonstrators in recent days as the protests have dragged into a 10th week, kept their distance.

The Orthodox Church, which backed Serbian nationalist war aims during the Yugoslav conflict, stayed silent for weeks while pro-democracy protests swept Serbia. But Patriarch Pavle blessed student protesters at a rally last week and said he would lead his flock in the Saint Sava Day procession.

Once police had withdrawn their cordon during the night some 50,000 students and supporters swept triumphantly through the city in a boisterous, whistle-blowing march.

"This is our great victory... I feel glorious and victorious," said student Djordjevic Todorovic.

contrast to clashes that have erupted in recent days as tensions flared after 10 weeks of protests.

On Sunday, riot police charged protesters in central Belgrade. The demonstrators ran from the police cordon and no major violence was reported.

The opposition also planned a march later Monday to include a tour of the city's churches.

Since Thursday the Socialists had loosened the leash on riot police weary by round-the-clock duty in the winter cold.

The police pummelled protesters, including women and children, blocking roads in several cities. Seven people were injured.

Opposition leaders told a rally Sunday police beatings would fail to defuse popular discontent against Mr. Milosevic's authoritarian rule.

Meanwhile opposition officials took over at city hall in Nis Monday in a transfer of power ceremony largely boycotted by the Socialist Party of Serbian President Milosevic.

The inaugural session of the new city council was formally opened by the sole Socialist Party (SPS) member present, Bozidar Bozovic, who apologised for the absence of the outgoing Nis mayor.

Democratic Party leader Zoran Djindjic, an opposition leader, told the new council: "You now have a heavy responsibility on your shoulders. You must create a model of democratic power and fight against corruption."

Nis is the fourth largest city in the country's second largest city, with some 300,000 inhabitants, and its fate in Serbia's political crisis has been the subject of a dizzying array of rulings and counter-rulings since the Nov. 17 local elections.

The local electoral commission first said the Socialists, who are former Communists, won in Nis. It then reversed itself and said the opposition won. The Socialists then appealed, but on Jan. 17 a court upheld the opposition victory.

Nis is among 14 towns and cities where the opposition won but the government initially annulled the results.

Under pressure from the international community and facing more than two months of street protests at home, the regime has now acknowledged defeat in five of the 14 but refused to relinquish the top prize, the city assembly in Belgrade.

Algeria must sort out own problems, France insists

PARIS (AFP) — Violence-wracked Algeria must sort out its own problems, preferably by democratic means, France said Monday, rebuffing a call for Paris to take an international lead over the unrest there.

Foreign Minister Hervé De Charette reiterated Paris' neutrality over its former colony, where the latest upsurge of a violent civil war has left more than 200 people dead in a few weeks.

"The situation is a very serious one," he said, denying that a body like the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) should become involved.

"But as you know, Algeria is an independent country. And for the moment, we think it is the responsibility of the Algerian people, Algerian leaders to solve their own problems," he said in Copenhagen.

In Paris the French Foreign Ministry said it hoped

upcoming legislative and local elections, due to be held before June, could help calm unrest.

"Like the Algerian people, we hope this process will lead to a genuine national reconciliation, as well as an end to violence," said ministry spokesman Yves Doutraux.

They were responding to a demand by opposition Socialist leader Lionel Jospin for France to get off the fence and do something about the conflict, sparked by the cancellation in 1992 of elections which the fundamentalist Islamic Salvation Front (FIS) was poised to win.

"France must lift the taboo, it must not remain silent, nor give the impression of unconditional support for the Algerian regime" of President Liamine Zerroul, he told the daily Liberation.

France has been accused by some fundamentalist militants of backing the Al-

giers regime. A terror campaign in 1995 killed eight in France, while a Paris bomb blast last month killed four.

Mr. Jospin openly criticised the Algiers regime for some measures — and said other world leaders looked to France, the former colonial power in the North African country, to take the lead.

"No one is doing anything (about it) in Europe because France is not doing anything."

In Copenhagen, Mr. De Charette said the OSCE had no role to play in Algeria. Denmark currently holds the presidency of the pan-European security organisation.

"I don't think that the situation in Algeria is in the field of competence of the OSCE," he said.

His spokesman in Paris echoed the call for Algeria to sort out its own problems. "The Algerian people

have the main responsibility," he said.

"Algeria is a sovereign state, resolving Algeria's problems is for the Algerian people and not for the French," he added.

In Algeria, more than 200 people have been slaughtered since Islamic radicals fighting the Algiers regime vowed to step up attacks during the Muslim Holy Month of Ramadan.

An Islamic leader living in exile in France Monday accused the Algiers regime of being behind the latest massacres.

"The military junta wants by these attacks to create a situation of psychosis among the people to push them to support it," said said Lahlali, speaking as a senior figure in the now-banned FIS.

"At the same time it is seeking to shock international opinion, so that it maintains its support," he said in a statement released in Rennes.

Clashes continue in eastern Zaire

KISANGANI, Zaire (AFP) — Clashes involving artillery and air power are continuing between Zairean government troops and rebel forces along the River

Osso in eastern Zaire, sources said Monday.

On Sunday, several heavily loaded Zairean fighter-bombers took off from Kisangani Airport to the front line, an AFP correspondent said.

Sources on the ground said two 800-strong brigades were fighting on the rebel side against 1,000 government soldiers being supplied from Kisangani.

Medical sources said that about 15 wounded had been treated at Kisangani Hospital over the past two days, but the press has been barred from entering the hospital and a neighbouring clinic.

Fighters have dug in on either side of the river, near a metal bridge that has been made all but impassable by its exposure to gunfire.

This front line has been in place nearly two weeks, since rebels backed by Rwandan and Ugandan soldiers attempted to attack the Amici Camp, which shelters some 40,000 people.

The rebels suspect the refugees include former Rwandan militia who were driven out of their country following the 1994 genocide.

Witnesses reported a stream of weapons and ammunition, notably 120 mm rocket launchers for mounting onto vehicles, arriving at Kisangani Airport.

All the arms are apparently being delivered to the front by air, with no military traffic seen on the road leading to the front, which is located halfway between Kisangani and the eastern border with Rwanda some 500 kilometres away.

Flights have been ongoing since late last week, with civilians denied access to the improvised airport near the Amici Camp.

Gazelle or Puma helicopters — delivered by France before a European arms embargo was imposed in 1994 — are frequently seen flying over Kisangani.

Lebed says Russians will soon see Yeltsin unfit to rule

MOSCOW (AFP) — Russian presidential hopeful and former National Security Chief Alexander Lebed said in an interview Monday that people would realise "within two months maximum" that President Boris Yeltsin was no longer capable of fulfilling his duties.

"Within two months maximum this will be perfectly clear to everyone, including the most optimistic," Gen. Lebed told the weekly Novaya Gazeta.

For the past few weeks Gen. Lebed, who came third in the first round of the June-July presidential elections, has been calling for Mr. Yeltsin to resign on health grounds.

Mr. Yeltsin co-opted Gen. Lebed after the first round,

appointing him secretary of the Security Council, but sacked him in October after the abusive, plain-speaking ex-general fell foul of Mr. Yeltsin's team.

Mr. Lebed reiterated his demand that the presidential constitution, pushed through by Mr. Yeltsin in 1993, be revised.

"Russia must be changed from an ultra-presidential republic into a presidential-parliamentary republic," said Gen. Lebed, stressing that even a healthy president could not fulfil all the duties incumbent on him according to the constitution.

Gen. Lebed, the most popular politician in Russia according to recent opinion polls, said his main rival in the next presidential elec-

tions would be Moscow Mayor Yuri Luzhkov.

He dismissed the chances of Prime Minister Viktor Chernomyrdin, who was briefly acting president while Mr. Yeltsin was undergoing heart surgery last November.

"He (Chernomyrdin) is worn-out stuff. He is just being kept on as a scapegoat, so that he can be blamed when the system collapses," Gen. Lebed said.

He vowed that if elected, he would first take steps to revive the economy.

"All the barriers should be lifted to repatriate Russia's national wealth," he said, adding that some \$260 billion had left the country since the collapse of the Soviet Union in December 1991.

U.S.-Russia relations are not based on Yeltsin — Albright

WASHINGTON (R) — Secretary of State Madeleine Albright said Sunday that U.S. ties with Russia's government are not dependent on ailing President Boris Yeltsin.

She said on NBC's Meet The Press that a planned meeting between President Bill Clinton and Mr. Yeltsin in March in the United States was still expected to take place but no exact time or place has been arranged.

Ms. Albright said the Clinton administration was closely monitoring Mr. Yeltsin's progress.

"So while we really wish Boris Yeltsin well and we have a very good relationship with him, it's important that people understand that our relationships with Russia are based on where they're going, other people in the government, and the possibility that we will be able to work better and better together," she said.

The new secretary of state said the immediate focus is on a February meeting between Vice President Al Gore and Prime Minister Viktor Chernomyrdin.

Mr. Yeltsin is recovering from double pneumonia, which struck him earlier this month just two weeks after he returned to the Kremlin after undergoing heart surgery.

"The Yeltsin-Chernomyrdin agreement is one that is on the right track, and we are working with them," she said.

She declined to comment on attempts to oust Mr. Yeltsin in the Duma, the Russian parliament.

"Well, I think the issue here is — I'm not going to get involved in Russian internal politics. The issue is that Russia needs to stay on the right track in terms of democratic principles and moving towards market reform, and we will do everything we can to work with them to make sure that that happens," Ms. Albright said.

Mr. Yeltsin, reelected last July, was out of the Kremlin for most of the second half of 1996 with heart problems, and he had a bypass operation on Nov. 5.

Yeltsin working on papers, no meetings scheduled — Kremlin

MOSCOW (R) — Russian President Boris Yeltsin was working on papers but had no official meetings scheduled for Monday at the state residence where he is convalescing from pneumonia, the Kremlin said.

"The president is working on documents," a spokesman for the Presidential Press Service said.

The spokesman said he had no new details about the 65-year-old president's state of health, one week after he left hospital following 12 days of treatment for pneumonia.

Mr. Yeltsin, recovering at the Gorky-9 residence outside Moscow, was expected to have several meetings this week but none was scheduled for Monday, said the spokesman.

Russian Television has shown no new footage of Mr. Yeltsin for three weeks, a longer gap even than the 15 days between the heart surgery he underwent on Nov. 5 and

his first television appearance after the operation.

Mr. Yeltsin's political opponents have called for his removal for health reasons, but the Kremlin has dismissed the demands.

Presidential Press Secretary Sergei Yastrzhembsky said Friday Mr. Yeltsin had not yet completed his recovery from pneumonia but was keen to return to full work and did not intend to scrap several planned foreign trips.

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Jakarta fire destroys hundreds of shops

JAKARTA (AFP) — A fire in central Jakarta Monday destroyed hundreds of shops in a commercial centre and raged unchecked for several hours because emergency exits were padlocked, firefighters said.

The fire in the busy shopping and office district started before dawn, according to police, and smoke was still billowing from the four-storey harco building around midday.

No casualties were reported but police were investigating the blaze. Several witnesses were being questioned, according to Captain Edwart Syah Pernong of Central Jakarta Police.

Security staff said no-one was in the building at the time because the fire started so early in the morning.

The state Antara News Agency reported the fire may have been sparked by a short-circuit on the second floor.

Jakarta Fire Chief Suharto said there may have been a gas leak in a Kentucky

Fried Chicken outlet in the building, the Suara Pembinaan daily reported.

He said his department had problems containing the fire because some emergency exits were padlocked and nearby fire hydrants were not functioning.

Tursandi Alwi, a deputy mayor of central Jakarta, said that if safety conditions were at fault for the delay in containing the fire, the management of the Harco building, Pt Gunung Sewu, must be held responsible.

The complex houses hundreds of stores, mostly textile and shoe outlets, but there is also a branch of the Matarhari Department Store chain and the group's central administrative office.

A fire at a department store in the nearby city of Bogor last March claimed 10 lives, according to officials. Observers and witnesses said the toll was much higher.

Emergency exits at the Bogor Department Store were bolted, delaying firefighters.

Aung San Suu Kyi receives honorary U.S. degree

WASHINGTON (AFP) — Burmese democracy activist Aung San Suu Kyi received her first U.S. honorary university degree Sunday in absentia, and in prepared remarks urged a boycott of companies doing business with Burma's military regime.

Mrs. Suu Kyi was unable to receive the doctor of laws degree in person at the American university because she would be refused reentry into Burma, said her husband, Michael Aris, who accepted the honour on her behalf.

Mr. Aris, a British scholar of Tibet and Himalayan studies at Oxford University, said he had not seen his wife in more than a year. He then read her prepared commence-

ment address to more than 400 graduating students, their families and friends, as well as her supporters who arrived from across the country for the event.

"You who are gathered here to celebrate the opening of doors of hope and opportunity might wish to assist our fight for a Burma where young people can know the joys of hope and opportunity," Mrs. Suu Kyi said in the address read by Mr. Aris.

In an impassioned plea for human rights, the 1991 winner of the Nobel Peace Prize called for her audience to stand up to repression and tyranny.

"Those of us who decided to work for democracy in Burma made our choice in

the conviction that the danger of standing up for basic human rights in a repressive society was preferable to the safety of a quiescent life in servitude," she wrote.

The dissident blasted multinational businesses' investment in Burma for showing up the military regime, and urged a boycott.

"Investment that only goes to enrich an already wealthy elite bent on monopolising both economic and political power cannot contribute towards equality and justice, the foundation stones for a sound democracy," Mrs. Suu Kyi wrote.

"I would therefore like to call upon those who have an interest in expanding their capacity for promoting in-

tellectual freedom and humanitarian ideals to take a principled stand against companies which are doing business with the military regime of Burma."

"Please use your liberty to promote ours," American University President Benjamin Lader, before presenting a hood representing the degree to Mr. Aris, said she was being honoured for her distinguished life work.

Mr. Lader, addressing her directly as if she were present, noted the admiration of the Burmese people and international respect "for your personal courage, commitment to democracy and embodiment of humanitarian ideals."

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Unfinished business

PARLIAMENT ENDORSEMENT Sunday of the one-person, one-vote formula should not have the rectification of other features of the existing Election Law. The formula as such is a positive one. But we cannot adopt one positive element for conducting national elections and disregard other complementary corrections without which the one-person, one-vote system would remain lacking and incomplete. That's why many people remain unsatisfied with what the Lower House had agreed on on Sunday.

Prime Minister Abdul Karim Kabariti has conceded during the parliamentary debate on the subject that the country must still aim at articulating a new and modern election law that would address other major issues such as proportional representation and quotas system for women, religious and ethnic minorities. But this admission alone would not diminish the valid criticism that patching up one aspect of the legislation without addressing the other faulty aspects of the law would otherwise turn a good step into one of public concern. Instead of just promising to examine the other remaining dimensions of the law, the government should at least commit itself more effectively to a timetable for finishing the unfinished work. This clearer commitment is rendered all the more pressing and necessary because the parliamentary debate on the issue was both heated and acrimonious even though at the end of the day the adoption of the 1993 temporary legislation was attained by a vote of 51 votes for and 21 against.

The picture that emerged from Sunday's session suggests that the country is sufficiently divided on how best to carry out future parliamentary elections as to warrant more a forceful commitment to legislate into a law "modern election principles" that satisfy the country's quest for a more advanced form of democracy. Since parliamentary elections are scheduled to take place in November, there is ample time left to search for a national consensus on the remaining aspects of the law. Perhaps the most important aspect governing the November elections is, as the prime minister noted, the realignment of the electoral constituencies in a way that would give full meaning to the formula of one-person, one-vote. Fortunately this single aspect does not require a formal amendment to the law. According to the law itself the division of the country into constituencies requires only an administrative decision by the government.

Much of the work for the achievement of that goal, therefore, depends on the prime minister. We are hopeful that by summer a new formula will be worked out that would be satisfactory to all political groups in the country.

ARABIC PRESS COMMENTARIES

PARLIAMENT ENDORSEMENT of the election law was the subject of Al Ra'i editorial on Monday. It said that by endorsing the law, following a lengthy debate, parliament has contributed to deepening the democratic practice in the country. The newspaper said that the arguments brought by the opposition, the government and the rest of the deputies are a striking example of a democratic process that, at the end of the day, resorts to voting as a civilised and modern method of ensuring the rule of the majority. It said that the prime minister's emphasis that the right to oppose the law was as sacred as the right to endorse it was a clear indication that the government is committed to upholding the principles of democracy. It noted that the prime minister, while insisting on the central concept of the law — the one-person, one-vote — did however admit that other aspects of the law could be amended to make it a more advanced legislation. The newspaper also noted that articles in the law dealing with the number of constituencies, the quota system, the voting process, can all be still considered when all the political spectrum enters into dialogue over the formulation of a new law.

AL DUSTOUR daily meanwhile commented on the joint document that the Israeli Labour and Likud parties agreed on this week, spelling out their common vision for a final solution to the Palestinian problem. The newspaper said it saw in the document a new hurdle placed in the path of a just and lasting peace. Israel cannot debate the fate of the Palestinian with itself, the paper said. It reminded its readers that the current Middle East peace talks are not based on political consensus in Israel, but rather on the Security Council resolutions 242 and 338, on the principles that govern the Madrid conference, on American letters of assurances and on international legitimacy. It concluded that the Labour-Likud document is of no value since it is only a one-sided view of how the Palestinian-Israeli conflict could be solved.

The View from the Fourth Circle

The millennium dance — celebrating or expropriating history?

By Rami G. Khouri

THE COMMEMORATION of the millennium — the end of 1999 and the start of the year 2000 — has started in many parts of North America and Western Europe (where it assumes a strong ideological/cultural dimension) and to a lesser extent in Israel (where the religious/cultural/tourist angle predominates). Most of the rest of the world appears to be watching or reading about it in those venerable organs of contemporary Western culture — Time, Newsweek and the Economist.

The advent of the millennium, I fear, is already in danger of being taken hostage by a gang of ideological hijackers who wish to claim it as their own, and to use it as a triumphalist celebration of their own heritage and ideology. As we approach what will be the most dramatic moment of modern world history (matched only by the landing of the first human being on the moon), it is both shocking and sad that Arab/Israeli peoples and cultures are so absent from the whole millennial enterprise.

I fear that the West, and perhaps Israel as well, will try to transform the full historical and moral breadth of the last 2000 years into a cheering exercise for the post-Enlightenment legacy of Western-style democracy, seen primarily through a lens of Judeo-Christian traditions. An early and influential indication of this approach to the millennium is a small book entitled "On the Eve of the Millennium," published recently by the distinguished Irish statesman and writer Conor Cruise O'Brien, in which he offers an intriguing mix of sparkling wisdom and frightening ignorance.

On the wisdom front, he makes some important points: the most interesting, in my view, was that Western democracy may be threatened by an "inherent weakness: the tendency to produce... leaders who are specialists in winning popularity contests... Democracy is turning into a series of plebiscites, over which the spin doctor is king... There is a tragic paradox here in that the forms which freedom of expression is taking in the late twentieth century are beginning to threaten democracy itself: the only tradition that permits freedom of expression."

In the ignorance department, he argues that the making of common cause between official Catholicism and fundamentalist Islam — what he calls the Alliance for the Repeal of the Enlightenment — threatens the future of the Enlightenment, which he understands as "comprehending also, within itself, the future of democracy, freedom of expression, and the rule of law."

The rule of law, he reminds us, "is anterior to the Enlightenment... Magna Carta dates from the thirteenth century, not the eighteenth." He adds that "the rule of Islamic law — the Shari'a — operates, wherever and however it is enforced, to the exclusion of practices based on Enlightenment values" and, he also adds, "Islamic fundamentalists... are also addicted to what the decadent West describes as terrorism."

I mention these points of Mr O'Brien primarily to show the dangers that we will face as we get closer to the new millennium. If an always distinguished and often erudite man such as Conor Cruise O'Brien gets the discussion

going with such a confused Euro-centric combination of intellectual triumphalism, cultural arrogance, historical selectivity and religious nonsense, what will we have to put up with when less enlightened people join the discussion?

My criticism of millennial perspectives such as Mr O'Brien's is that they are fundamentally colonial in a retrospective way. They reflect the belief that the Enlightenment in Europe was the defining moment of modern history and the intellectual and ideological pivot, around which we should assess the past, celebrate the present and chart our passage into the future. I am a great fan of the Enlightenment, but I am not so blinded by its glamour that I lose sight of the approximately 4,500 years of history in the wider Mediterranean basin (especially in the Middle East) that fed into, gave birth to, and culminated in the European Enlightenment and other associated splendours.

"If there is a single, overarching theme to the entire sweep of the last 2,000 years, it is neither Enlightenment values nor even Magna Carta legacies; rather, it is the wider, older and more enduring tradition of trans-Mediterranean cultural interaction that has bound Europe and the Middle East together in a symbiotic relationship that has enriched both."

If there is a single, overarching theme to the entire sweep of the last 2,000 years, it is neither Enlightenment values nor even Magna Carta legacies; rather, it is the wider, older and more enduring tradition of trans-Mediterranean cultural interaction that has bound Europe and the Middle East together in a symbiotic relationship that has enriched both. The ancient Middle East, the Greco-Roman world and modern Europe are bound together by principles of participatory or representative governance, personal rights and the rule of law that are most impressive precisely because they are so old and have travelled such a long journey amongst the cultures of this ancient Mediterranean basin.

Many books have been written about the contributions of ancient Oriental (Levantine, Mesopotamian, Egyptian) values to the classical world, and subsequently of the Islamic world's role in preserving and expanding the classical heritage and transmitting it to Europe to spark the Renaissance and the Enlightenment.

The central emphasis that Islam has always placed on the concept of justice, for example, in both personal morality and the quality of public governance, should be a strong link in the chain of values across the millennial sweep. It is reflected also in the following famous Sasanian saying from pre-Islamic times, known as the "circle of power" and which was repeatedly mentioned by mediaeval Arab and Muslim thinkers: "There is no kingdom without an army, no army without wealth, no wealth without material prosperity, and no material prosperity without justice."

The "circle of power" can be seen as a historical preface to what Conor Cruise O'Brien writes today: "In Western societies, where the laws themselves have been shaped and tempered by centuries of Enlightenment values, the rule of law, associated as it is in these societies with democracy, freedom of expression, and market freedom, is inseparable from the general heritage of the Enlightenment."

Markets, material progress and the rule of law, it seems, have been associated with one another for a very long time. The central and repeated emphasis on justice in Middle Eastern Arab/Islamic, Christian and Jewish traditions should prompt us and our colleagues in the West to see the millennium for what it really is: a milestone on a long and old road, characterised by profound moral and cultural relationships among the civilisations to the north, east and south of the Mediterranean Sea.

As Patricia Springborg and other scholars have suggested, modern Western democracies and their classical predecessors owe important conceptual debts to ancient, Oriental traditions that must have influenced concepts of kingship, governance and personal rights in the West. A few noteworthy examples are: law and medical schools at Ebla, in modern day Syria, to which women were admitted in the third millennium BC (nearly 3,000 years before we even started this millennial moment); the stress on personal, contractual and legal rights of individuals in the assorted Mesopotamian laws of the second and third millennia BC, including the Hammurabi Code of the early second millennium and the Ur-Nammu Code of 2050 BC; evidence for representative councils in ancient Sumer and Egypt, and a bicameral legislature in Sippur after 1894 BC; and the first documented use of the word "freedom" in Lagash (southern Iraq today), in a reform document dated around 2350 BC.

This suggests to me that the millennium of the past 2,000 years should be celebrated with the ideological honesty, nationalistic humility and chronological comprehensiveness that it rightly deserves, in view of its vast sweep of peoples and places. The millennium should not be an intellectual freak show for stressed-out Westerners who have overdone on secularism, nationalism, individualism and materialism; rather, it should be a celebration of the universality and cross-cultural interdependence of the human family and its many common values.

The people of the Arab/Israeli world and other parts of the developing South should wake up and reengage in this millennial dance and celebration or once again risk having their history expropriated or obliterated by the West.

Building on tradition means change is not an end in itself

By Dr. Reinhard K. Sprenger

IT IS a well-known fact that the prime function of management is to disturb all the other workers. Naturally, this noble activity is always in the service of such worthy causes as "deployment of strategy," "bringing about change," or "restructuring." Thus change becomes an end in itself; the transition from fixed to flexible structures a sacred mission. Traditional hierarchies are replaced by networking; and knowledge by learning. In short, an overblown reason is anxious to make its case before the court of history. In the dock — the much reviled status quo.

In a climate dominated by the ubiquitous demand for change, fewer and fewer havens of corporate life are spared the cold wind of this new reality. Increasingly subject to an all-pervading scrutiny, the employee is confronted with an ever-growing clamour: "Justify yourself!" Give the context, it is legitimate to consider the possibility of life without management. Work processes would then flow in a natural, self-regulating manner. But would they be better or worse? And how would this be measured? In many ways, management is the very source of the crisis that it attempts to master.

"Lean Management," for example: the very incarnation of an anorexic corporate culture where the entire workforce is fortified on substances designed to curb their appetites. The accepted wisdom here is that a reduction of the workforce is directly proportional to a reduction of the problem, a

proposition which, pursued ad absurdum yields truisms of the calibre: "Once we've shut down the business completely, we'll be left with no costs whatsoever." "Team Spirit," for example: the siren call of "Teamwork!" is uttered by those whose careers owe little to the cultivation of this talent. Indeed, the hot-house atmosphere of competition within corporate structures makes it practically obscene to call for trust in the idea of teamwork. In such a competitive climate, the truth is that the only thing that interests me about my colleague is whether or not he fails. Trust and competition are mutually exclusive.

"Entrepreneurship," for example: "Be an entrepreneur!" cry employees whose very success is parasitic upon the inability of their colleagues to get themselves organised; employees who nonetheless demand behavioural changes from people who have lingered 20 years within an enterprise precisely because they are not entrepreneurs. As it is, many already over-regulated companies would fail to cope with the extra administration entrepreneurship would bring.

The lament of those apostles of reengineering, Hammer and Champy, that the failure of their theory be down to an insufficiently radical will to put it into practice is, one may assume, a joke. Should practice be made to suffer for its inability to harmonise with theory? Happily, within the majority of companies there exists an extremely loyal and intelligent will to repair the effects wreaked

by increasingly short-lived management methods. The way in which a species of constructive disobedience, working from below, still conspires to create something sensible from such methods is a minor art in itself. Imagine what would happen if people were to set about actually putting into practice the nonsense crammed into them by the advocates of this fundamental mobilisation!

"Tradition is valid not because it has proved to be right, but because we cannot do without it."

Innovation requires tradition; the future needs the past. Hermann Lühke has formulated the essential point here: "Tradition is valid not because it has proved to be right, but because we cannot do without it." People remain dependent upon tradition; thus, a certain persistence of the habitual is unavoidable.

Moreover, this is also why the age of ever accelerating change also remains one of compensation. Permanent change is merely the latest instalment, using different means, of the return of the same: a Neo-Taylorism, deployed along horizontal

process chains, and calling itself reengineering. Each call to "Change Yourself!" implies a devaluation of the old. On this ground alone, one cannot demand that someone deviate from what is customary. Just as people cannot be "brought up" to be free, because upbringing always presupposes the withdrawal of freedom, it is impossible to motivate them to do that which should be done of one's own free will. If anything really needs to be changed here, it is to dismantle the constraints that hinder responsibility from being freely assumed.

People learn very slowly, if at all. Beneath the behavioural surface is a bedrock of personal traits, basic attitudes and mental programming, all endowed with enormous inertia. The desire to change people — management's favourite game — is therefore an unpromising venture. It proceeds according to the absurd motto: "You have to change in order to make things better for me." But people are not trivial machines to be manipulated at the touch of a button. They only change when they want to do so. This does not necessarily exclude any development. The important thing to remember, however, is that relationships function between people as they are, and not as they should be.

Dr. Reinhard K. Sprenger is a corporate consultant and author of the book "Das Prinzip Selbstverantwortung" (The Principle of Individual Responsibility). This article is reprinted from the New World magazine.

LETTERS

Metaphysics, not mathematics

To the Editor:

I WAS pleased to find out from Ramy Tadros' letter "Missed point on lost money" (Jordan Times, Jan. 22, 1997), which came in answer to the article I had written six days before, "The ricochet theory of history", that the Jordan Times is read in Harvard. However, I have to stress that it is not I, but he, who misses the point. I am not talking about an accounting error but suggesting a paradigmatic shift in perception of the Palestine-Israeli conflict, less mathematical than metaphysical, a breaking of the shards which I call ricochet.

Oddly enough, some of the most rabid Jewish racists, like American Rabbi Meir Kahane, were personally untouched by the Holocaust, while some who suffered directly and horribly, like Professor Israel Shahak, rescued nearly dead from an extermination camp at 14 years of age by the Allies, has been, since 1967, a tireless champion of Palestinian rights. Another proof of the ricochet theory of history!

I recommend that Mr. Tadros read some of the books I mentioned in my article. Roberta Strauss Feuerlicht quotes a New York rabbi who infuriated his congregation by telling them they had made kitsch of the Holocaust and that, if the six million were to come back to life tomorrow, his wealthy flock would not even invite them home to dinner. She also says it was the propaganda coup of the century that the Jews took the land from the Arabs and then presented themselves to the world as victims. Perhaps this is why Time-Life, which published her brilliant book, "The Fate of the Jews", refused to reprint it despite many requests.

One further note: I was being tongue-in-cheek about the ricochet theory alleged to have killed President Kennedy: I don't believe that for a moment. But I am dead serious about the atavistic nature of a folkloric figure who was given to temper tantrums (like that which occasioned the Deluge), ordered the slaughter of whole peoples, including sucking babies, and liked to be carried around the desert in a box. This primitive idea of a deity is of someone I would not even invite home to dinner. Just read the First and Second Books of Samuel if you think I am making this up.

Dr. A. Clare Brandabur, English Department, Al Isra University.

The Jordan Times welcomes letters and contributions from its readers on any subject they wish to tackle. Letters intended for publication, however, should contain the writer's full name and preferably address as well. Names can be withheld only upon request and under special circumstances. Letters are subject to editing. The newspaper is not responsible for the return of unused manuscripts.

Feature Multim comp

NEW YORK (UNIN) — A multimedia presentation on the first five years of the work of the United Nations Commission on Human Rights was made to the press Friday by the president of the commission, Ambassador Antonio de Gouveia. The commission's secretary, Patricia Springborg, also made a statement. The commission's work has been shown to members of the Security Council.

The United Nations Commission on Human Rights, established in 1946, is the main body of the United Nations responsible for human rights. It has three organs: the Human Rights Council, the Human Rights Commission, and the Human Rights Committee. The commission's work has been shown to members of the Security Council.

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Survival

By Stuart Wavell

IF a prehistoric man from 200,000 years ago were miraculously transported to contemporary times today, he would be sure of a big surprise. Behind the bars of a Plexiglas cage is a mating pair of Homo sapiens, engaged for a three-week period in the mundane business of eating, sleeping and exercising before the public gaze. (Breeding is confined to after hours.)

Only one feature of this spectacle might impress our ancient forbear, who for convenience we shall call Aime the modern male human, 35-year-old Henrik Lehmann, is a trained acrobat adept at escaping into the trees. In almost every other respect, the pair lack the most elementary skills of survival. They cannot make weapons; they cannot hunt any of the 250 animal species exhibited around them; and they cannot create fire with sticks. So much for the lords of creation.

It has now become clear that primitive man achieved many more accomplishments than these and that he existed at a much higher level of sophistication than anyone was willing to admit. Perhaps the most telling evidence of his brilliant intellect was the revelation in the British Association for the Advancement of Science that he used music to soothe his savage beast.

New evi

Researcher have presented new evidence that the mystic known as black holes do in fact exist. But even the scientists who did the research said this was not conclusive.

A new shed of evidence showed the presence of "event horizons," one way black holes that, once crossed cut off all contact with the rest of the universe, researchers reported at a meeting of the American Astronomical Society.

Black holes, first posited by Albert Einstein, have been the subject of much speculation. They are thought to be regions of space where gravity is so strong that nothing, not even light, can escape.

World Bank foresees continued high economic growth in East Asia

WASHINGTON (AFP) — East Asia should enjoy high economic growth into the next century but must commit itself to ending poverty and inequality in income distribution, the World Bank has said.

A recent slump in certain countries reflects temporary phenomena and does not point to economic decline, the bank found in its latest regional forecast.

"Some economies are going through adjustments but the underlying growth momentum remains extraordinarily strong," the World Bank said.

The study stressed that contrary to fears in certain quarters that robust East Asian expansion can hurt job growth in the West, "rapid East Asian growth is good for the world."

"When East Asia's exports grow, so do its imports," the study pointed out.

While the region, excluding Japan, accounts for only

eight per cent of global gross domestic product, it takes in 17 per cent of world imports and is expected to account for more than 25 per cent in global imports between now and the end of the decade.

The bank acknowledged that such growth is most beneficial to skilled workers outside the region but insisted that "recent research indicates that on balance rising trade with East Asia helps, not hurts, unskilled workers as well."

The report said growth in the region since 1990 has averaged nine per cent, up from seven per cent in the previous decade.

Concern was recently raised by a fall-off in double digit export growth in China, South Korea, Singapore and Thailand.

In addition, according to the World Bank, current account deficits exceeded eight per cent of gross domestic product in

Swiss income inequality grows

BERN (AFP) — Switzerland's income inequality has widened over the past ten years, a report published here by a national scientific body said.

A quarter of national income today is held by 10 per cent of the population, while half the country's wealth is in the hands of just five per cent, the study by the Swiss National Fund for Scientific Research said.

"The inequalities are remarkable compared with other countries. Only in France, Ireland, Italy and the United States do the richest 10-15 per cent of the population absorb an equally high level of income," the study said.

A fifth of all Swiss households have no assets or are in debt, said the study, which estimates that between five and ten per cent of the population lives below the poverty threshold of 1,800 Swiss francs (\$1,500) per month.

The study said that although poverty numbers have not risen in Switzerland over the past few years, the profile of groups worst affected has changed. Previously the sick and unemployed were the biggest victims of poverty. Today men living alone, divorced women and single mothers are among those most affected.

Meanwhile, the independent KOF research institute has forecast that the Swiss economy will post zero growth this year after shrinking in 1996 while the jobless rate will continue to climb.

Swiss gross domestic product fell 0.6 in 1996 while the jobless rate stood at 5.3 per cent at year-end.

Unemployment will rise to 5.8 per cent of the workforce at the end of 1997 and 6.7 per cent at end-1998, the institute forecast.

Inflation should continue at around 1.1 per cent.

The depreciation of the Swiss franc against major currencies will not translate into immediate economic gains, the institute said.

However, a more expansionary budgetary policy should help kickstart the economy, Bernd Schipps, KOF director said.

HOROSCOPE FORECAST FOR TUESDAY, JANUARY 28, 1997

By Thomas S. Pierson, Astrologer, Carroll Righter Foundation

ARIES: (March 21 to April 19) Get an early start at handling your business activities today, since in the days ahead you'll need time for home matters. You should invite outsiders in, however, this will also be good for restoring harmony.

TAURUS: (April 20 to May 20) There may be some reckless driving around you today, so be quite cautious when on the highway. When handling correspondence, later this evening be sure to add a cheerful note and make someone's day.

GEMINI: (May 21 to June 21) Be sure you don't do anything foolish today, especially where finances are concerned. Remember the advice of an adviser, later this evening and think over your actions before making decisions concerning business.

MOON CHILDREN: (June 22 to July 21) Don't be upset if anything purposefully tries to hurt your feelings. Try to be "thick-skinned" and let any difficulty roll off your back. This is a good day today to make new plans for the days ahead, so seek out constructive advice.

LEO: (July 22 to August 21) Others may be too busy to listen to your ideas today, so put them in motion yourself and thereby make your life more successful. Avoid any critical individuals later this evening, and renew your plans before presenting them.

VIRGO: (August 22 to September 22) A situation which you may think you should have an opinion about arises today, however, it's really none of your business, so stay out of it. Study the basics of new projects later this evening and thereby proceed with full force.

LIBRA: (September 23 to October 22) Your intuition may be faulty today, so rely more on thought processes. Try not to be indiscreet in any manner or you'll pay dearly for it. Think more constructively concerning business activities and proceed with full force.

SCORPIO: (October 23 to November 21) Don't try to renege on a responsibility today, or you could easily get into a difficult situation. Watch your credit situation carefully. If your mate is being too demanding let him or her know it for their own good.

SAGITTARIUS: (November 22 to December 21) Don't be too forceful in some romantic affair today or you could run into troubled waters. Tact is quite important at this time when dealing with business or money matters which need immediate attention.

CAPRICORN: (December 22 to January 20) If a fellow associate acts too emotional today, do get upset. Instead today, be understanding and the situation will improve immeasurably. Stick to personal pursuits later this evening and become quite successful.

AQUARIUS: (January 21 to February 19) This is not a good day today to take any financial risks, or you could lose a bundle. If you go out with friends later this evening, economize and stick with simple, however, enjoyable pleasures which are fun.

PISCES: (February 20 to March 20) If you go out to a restaurant with a close friend later this evening, be sure to make it "Dutch treat" or you could find yourself short of funds. Work on perfecting your talents today, and you can benefit greatly.

BIRTHSTONE OF JANUARY: Garnet — Rose Quartz

REUTERS REUTERS

The Business of Information

Major Currencies & Cross Rates									
Currency	USD	DEM	GBP	CHF	JPY	CAD	ITL	NLG	FRF
US Dollar	-	1.6442	0.6180	1.4241	118.44	1.3436	1599.60	1.8148	5.5390
DE Mark	0.8082	-	0.3742	0.8660	72.85	0.8168	872.84	1.3228	3.3767
GB Sterling	1.6235	2.6675	-	2.3092	193.78	2.1813	2586.54	2.9652	8.8942
CH Franc	0.7022	1.1543	0.4321	-	83.65	0.9431	1122.90	129.81	3.8974
JP Yen	0.0084	1.3762	0.5152	1.1918	-	1.1244	13.39	154.40	4.6395
CA Dollar	0.7443	1.2257	0.4826	1.0675	1.12	-	1194.00	1.3788	4.1545
IT Lira	0.0006	1.0278	0.3847	0.0890	1341.02	0.8398	-	11.53	3.4648
NL Guilder	0.5420	88.99	0.3333	77.15	54.67	0.7275	866.10	-	3.8016
FR Franc	0.1805	0.2966	0.1110	25.840	21.52	0.2423	33.27	33.2700	-

Energy			Mid-East Currencies					
Oils	Last	Previous	Currency	USD	DEM	GBP	CHF	JPY
Brent	23.15	23.35	SA Riyal	0.2668	0.4388	0.16424	0.37987	31.8813
WTI	23.75	23.60	AE Dirham	0.2724	0.44815	0.16761	0.38812	32.3542
Bony	23.15	23.35	KW Oinar	3.3245	5.48747	2.04792	4.73709	397.298
Dubai	20.26	20.42	BH Dinar	0.3770	4.363	1.63388	3.77825	316.957
UL Gas	205.00	207.00	CY Pound	2.0236	3.3258	1.245	2.8002	241.507

Metal Prices			Currency Deposit Rates (Bid)				
Metal	Bid	Offer	Period	1 Month	3 Months	6 Months	1 Year
Gold (oz)	354.5	355	USD	5.36	5.48	5.56	5.68
Silver (oz)	5.04	5.06	GBP	6.06	6.19	6.37	6.62
Platinum (oz)	358.95	360.95	JPY	0.33	0.26	0.43	0.50
AL (3 Months)	1540	1641	DEM	2.94	3.03	2.83	2.94
CU (3 Months)	2247	2248	FRF	3.27	3.26	3.25	3.25
Zinc (3 Months)	1138	1140	CHF	1.50	1.53	1.72	1.82
Lead (3 Months)	696	697	ITL	7.31	7.11	6.75	6.38
NI (3 Months)	7280	7300					

Main Equity Indices		Value	Change	% Change	High	Low	Pr Ch
Bourse	Index						
New York	DOW JONES	6669.54	-26.94	-0.4	6708.8	6631.15	6896.48
New York	S&P 500	767.89	-2.53	-0.33	770.75	764.95	770.52
London	FT-SE 100	4212	-6.8	-0.16	4223.8	4206	4218.8
Tokyo	NIKKEI 225	17334.8	-354.46	-2	17664.8	17200.2	17688.8
Paris	CAC 40	2435.17	4.83	0.2	2445.17	2428.18	2430.34
Frankfurt	DAX	2994.53	-3.71	-0.12	2998.74	2988.04	2998.24

Energy		Commodity	Unit	Price	Unit	Price
Coffee (c/lbs)	141	Soybean	Spot			
Cocoa (c/lbs)	1330	Wheat (c/lbs)	Spot			
Sugar (c/lbs)	299.2	Soybean Meal	Spot			
Wheat (c/lbs)	133	Wheat (c/lbs)	Spot			
Soya (c/lbs)	22.71	Wheat (c/lbs)	Spot			
Tea (c/lbs)	115	Wheat (c/lbs)	Spot			
Barley (c/lbs)	2.18	Wheat (c/lbs)	Spot			
Rice (c/lbs)	470	Wheat (c/lbs)	Spot			

UAE economy seen as best performing in Gulf

ABU DHABI (AFP) — The United Arab Emirates (UAE) economy performed better than those in other Arab Gulf oil producers over the past five years because of higher oil exports and liberal policies, experts have said.

Although the UAE continued to suffer from a budget deficit, its current account and trade balance maintained a large surplus and the gross domestic product (GDP) grew faster than other Gulf economies, they said.

"The UAE has had the best performing economy in the Gulf over the past five years and the medium-term outlook remains quite positive," said Henry Azzam, chief economist at the Saudi National Commercial Bank.

Mr. Azzam, writing in the Abu Dhabi-based monthly magazine, Gulf Business, said the good performance was a result of higher oil exports due to an increase in production, strong growth

in the non-oil sector, and government policies.

"These policies include a liberal exchange and trade system, an outward-oriented economic strategy that stresses private sector initiative within a framework of effective regulation, extensive infrastructure investment by the government and improved confidence in domestic financial institutions," he added.

Mr. Azzam cited UAE and IMF figures as showing the emirates' GDP recorded high growth rates in the past few years, except in 1993, when it declined by 0.9 per cent. But in nominal terms, it grew by 0.4 per cent.

In 1995, the GDP surged by 5.8 per cent in real terms and is projected to jump by an estimated 8.5 per cent this year, said Mr. Azzam, one of the most prominent economists in the six-nation Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC).

The current account, a key indicator of economic performance, remained in a surplus at a time when it continued to reel under deficits in other GCC states.

It stood at around \$3.7 billion in 1995 and is forecast to soar to \$1.4 billion in 1996.

This is mainly due to an increase in oil export earnings to around \$14.6 billion from \$12.1 billion in 1995. The rise is because of a surge in oil prices to \$20 from \$16.64.

"Considering GDP growth, the balance of payment situation, exports and inflation, you can say the UAE's economy remained in a better shape than other Gulf economies in the past few years," Mohammad Al Asumi, director of the economic department at the government-run Emirates Industrial Bank, told AFP.

The UAE currently produces around 2.16 million barrels per day (bpd) of oil under an OPEC-decreed quota compared with 1.5

million bpd before the 1990 Iraqi invasion of Kuwait. It hiked output to make up for the disruption of crude supplies from Kuwait and Iraq during the crisis.

It is the only GCC state to have maintained spending levels despite the persistence of the shortfall and lower earnings in some years.

Expenditure by federal government and each of the country's seven emirates stood at 61.8 billion dirhams (\$16.83 billion) in 1995 and revenues at 53.5 billion dirhams (\$14.57 billion). This created a shortfall of nearly \$2.26 billion, according to official figures.

Mr. Azzam's projections showed spending would increase to 65.4 billion dirhams (\$17.82 billion) in 1996 and revenues to nearly 55.6 billion dirhams (\$15.14 billion), leaving a gap of \$2.68 billion.

Transport Minister Nasser Lawa said that the best benefit of 50 imports that were permitted by the volume of goods passing through the port will be docking of about one million tonnes of cargo.

He added that the port is ready to handle as much as 10 million tonnes annually, up from the current 20 million tonnes.

Al Asumi

THE Daily Crossword

ACROSS

- In error
- Game board piece
- Sonny's ex
- "nice day"
- Wallet bills
- Light ring
- "The" (TV show)
- Schoolbook
- Questions
- Blamish
- Welding tools
- Not as damp
- Swapping word
- Insertion marks
- That can be endured
- Riyadh natives
- Sudden gush
- Baseball score
- Ump's kin
- Suited
- Offer for sale
- Explosive letters
- Penn and
- Connery
- Blockade
- Facility
- Stunned
- Integers: abbr.
- Swampy spot
- Light jacket
- Cooking vessel
- Singer Adams
- Fashion magazine
- Well Street activity
- All cooked
- Appointment
- Store for later
- Idlered transport
- Forget-me
- Positive responses

by Diane C. Baldwin

DOWN

- Impact sound
- Pro
- Banking boobies
- Teacher's org.
- Stratagems
- Type of pool
- Once more
- Following
- Latin dance
- Mishmash
- Actress Sommer
- Betsy or Diana
- Close's use
- "Misericordies"
- Unusual
- C.S.A. soldiers, for short
- Menu
- Bout site
- Robert or George
- Units of work
- Roofed
- passageways
- Sudden move
- Put a stop to
- Rad end Dead
- Gets angry
- Serum container
- Aloof chap
- In a stylish manner
- For sure
- Reverent wonder
- Trapshooting
- Espouses
- Exalted one
- Inches in a span
- Verve
- Glee club voice
- "Garfield" dog
- Actors Berry and Howard
- Charlotte of "Diffrnt Strokes"

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Peanuts

I'M SENDING A CHRISTMAS CARD TO MICKEY MOUSE BECAUSE HE GAVE ME HIS SHOES.

Dear Mickey, Merry Christmas.

Thanks again for the shoes. Your friend, Spike

P.S. Just out of curiosity, why do you wear gloves all the time?

Andy Capp

I KNOW WE LOST PET BUT HOW DID YOU RATE MY PERFORMANCE?

DEFINITELY A ONE-MAN SHOW AS USUAL.

THANKS, PET.

HE PASSES THE BALL ABOUT AS OFTEN AS HE PASSES A PUB.

Mutt'n'Jeff

GOOD HEAVENS! I'M GLAD HERE MOVING OUT OF THIS PLACE BEFORE IT FALLS APART!

WHAT? LET ME KNOW IF I'M LOADING YOU DOWN.

Business

Higher land prices make home more expensive

Prices of housing units and apart-ments are surging in a bid for higher land prices. Construction costs will have no effect on the housing market, says the National Association of Home Builders.

Higher activity at Aqaba port

AN ISRAELI-ASIAN shipping company has announced a plan to increase the number of ships at Aqaba port. The company, which has been operating since 1994, has announced that it will increase the number of ships from 19 to 25.

THE BETTER HALF.

JUMBLE

NIGLY

BUJOM

SLAQU

HIENAL

Higher land prices, construction costs make houses, apartments more expensive in Amman

By Shehab Makahleh
Special to the Jordan Times

AMMAN — Prices of housing units and apartments, especially in western Amman, are surging as a result of higher land prices and construction costs which have noticeably risen in 1996 and are expected to continue rising in 1997.

Salem Abdallah, an investor in the housing sector, said construction costs rose by 15 per cent

in 1996 as a result of a rise in prices of lands by about 40 per cent.

Mr. Abdallah pointed out that the implementation of the sales tax has also caused an increase in the prices of apartments.

Ihab Nasser Eddin, a proprietor of a housing establishment, said that organisational laws and regulations, such as limiting the space between buildings, imposed by the Greater Amman Municipality contribute to raising

housing prices in addition to high construction costs, service fees, wages of labourers and customs on building materials.

Mr. Nasser Eddin expected higher building costs and land prices in the coming four years.

Nasser Ghasein, a real estate broker, indicated that land prices surged in 1995 and 1996 due to logical factors brought about by the peace process which consolidated stability and security as well as provided reassurance and optimism to investors in the housing sector.

Salameh Zureiq, another middleman, described the market for apartments in 1996 as good and predicted it would remain so in the future due to the stability prevailing in the region.

Mr. Zureiq expected the fluctuations and uncertainty at the stock exchange to force many investors to move to the real estate market.

Hisham Rashid, general manager of a company dealing in housing projects, said the higher prices were basically the result of land prices going up, in addition to construction fees which until 1993 were not more than JD150 per square metre, compared to JD250-JD300 now.

Mr. Rashid also expected prices to keep on rising, especially under the strict implementation of organisational regulations by the Municipality of Greater Amman.

He criticised the routine procedures at many government institutions and indicated that for a transaction to purchase a plot of land for constructing a building and selling it as apartments need tens of signatures from various government departments.

The contractor pointed out that land prices in western Amman have rocketed to between JD250 and JD300 per square metre since 1992 and that apartments cost between JD33,000 and JD80,000.

Mr. Rashid also criticised the high interest rates charged by banks for extending housing loans and said that imposing such interest as high as 15 per cent discourages people from purchasing apartments.

Foreign purchases of British businesses reach record levels

LONDON (AFP) — Purchases of British businesses by foreign companies reached a record high value of \$38.54 billion in 1996, accountants at KPMG have said.

"The buying spree in the U.K. last year was led by U.S. businesses, spurred on by the race to acquire regional electricity companies," the company said in its annual study of international takeover activity.

KPMG compiled data from 5,500 cross-border mergers and acquisitions around the world, which totalled \$263 billion in 1996.

The study showed that the United States remained as the favoured destination for foreign capital. Overseas companies pumped a record \$68.3 billion into U.S. companies, the study found. This was 10 per cent higher than in 1995.

KPMG said in a statement that the value of foreign takeovers of British companies exceeded the total for all other European Union countries combined.

"International companies evidently believe that the U.K. is the best base for expansion in Europe — and they are not being put off by the prospect of Britain missing the first stage of European monetary union," head of mergers and acquisitions at KPMG, Stephen Barrett, said.

He predicted that British companies would continue to be a much-favoured prey of overseas predators, regardless of any possible changes in government following general elections which must be held here by May 22.

"Regardless of the outcome of the general election — and in spite of the recent strength

of sterling — we expect Britain to remain a powerful magnet for multi-national companies in the year ahead," Mr. Barrett said.

U.S.-based companies were the keenest overseas investors in Britain. They snapped up British businesses with a value of \$20 billion in 1996.

Six of the 10 biggest foreign acquisitions of British companies were effected by U.S. businesses, including the regional electricity supply companies, Midland Electricity, London Electricity and Northern Electric.

The value of overseas acquisitions by British companies rose by almost 25 per cent to 34.1 billion pounds in 1996, KPMG said. British companies were second only to the U.S. counterparts in the value of overseas acquisitions.

Japan's bankruptcy liabilities second highest in 1996

TOKYO (AFP) — Japan's corporate bankruptcy liabilities totalled 7.99 trillion yen (\$67.7 billion) in 1996, the second highest figure in the post-war era, Teikoku Databank has said.

The sum was down 11.5 per cent from a record high of 9.33 trillion yen in 1995, the private credit research agency said.

The number of bankruptcies with debts of at least 10 million yen (\$84,750) totalled 14,544 in 1996, down 3.6 per cent from 1995 but still the second highest since 1990 when the "bubble" economy of inflated stock and real estate prices collapsed, it said.

Recession-induced bankruptcies numbered 9,095 cases, accounting 62.5 per cent of the total figure. The ratio topped 60 per cent for the fourth consecutive year.

"Liabilities swelled in 1996 due to bankruptcies of independent non-bank lenders and large real estate companies," Teikoku Databank said in a statement.

Nichiei Finance Co., a money lender based in Yokohama near Tokyo and listed on the second section of the Tokyo Stock Exchange, went under in October with record-high liabilities of one trillion yen.

Sueno Kusan, a realtor based in the western Japan city of Osaka and a major borrower from failed "Jusen" housing loan firms, went bankrupt in November with liabilities of 600 billion yen.

Teikoku Databank said it was not optimistic about the future trend of bankruptcies. "A series of large bankruptcies are expected for non-bank lenders and other companies benefited from the bubble economy," it said.

In December alone, the number of corporate bankruptcies fell 4.0 per cent from a year earlier to 1,259 cases.

Liabilities involved, however, surged 52.0 per cent year-on-year to 655.2 billion yen.

Daily Beat

A review of news from the Arabic press

Higher activity expected at Aqaba port this year

**AN INCREASED cruise ship activity and a higher number of tourists coming via Jordan's Red Sea port have raised the number of vessels that docked at Aqaba from 2,382 ships in 1995 to 2,735 boats in 1996, Ports Corporation Director General Mohamed Dalabeeh has said. He noted that the number of tourists has jumped from 19,328 visitors in 1995 to 27,000 in 1996.

Mr. Dalabeeh indicated that the volume of goods handled at Aqaba last year was two per cent higher than in 1995. He said that the port handled a total of 12.2 million tonnes of goods in 1996 compared to 11.76 million tonnes in 1995.

The port chief pointed out that there was a noticeable increase in the volume of containers which reached 75,333 containers in 1996 compared to 55,783 in the previous year. He attributed the rise to Aqaba being chosen by four large freight companies as a trans-shipment port in addition to the reduction of fees during the last quarter of 1996. The reduction in fees, he indicated, has generated an extra one per cent in financial returns in 1996 over the amount that the corporation earned in 1995.

Captain Dalabeeh said the corporation is about to build a special wharf for the passenger boats to support the tourism activity in the Kingdom.

Asked about his expectations for 1997, the port chief predicted higher activity as a result of the oil-for-food deal agreed between the U.N. and Iraq last year. He said that over the coming three months a total of 260,000 tonnes of wheat will be shipped through Aqaba to Iraq and, consequently, large number of ships will be docking at Aqaba.

He added that the port is ready to handle the future activity easily as the current volume of work, currently at 12 million tonnes annually represents only 60 per cent of the maximum capacity that the port can handle.

Transport Minister Nasser Lawzi said recently that Aqaba will "at best benefit of 50 per cent of Iraqi imports" that were permitted by the U.N. He expected the volume of goods passing through Aqaba to Iraq to be about one million tonnes adding: "The activity at the port will certainly be below the levels witnessed in the 1980s when the port used to handle around 20 million tonnes." (Al Ra'i + Al Dustour + Al Aswaq).

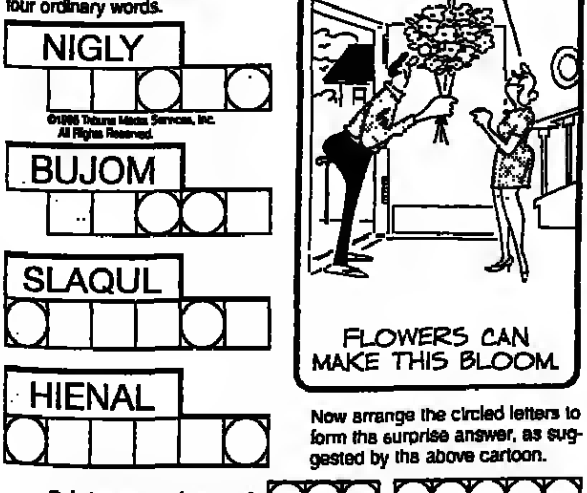
THE BETTER HALF.



"It's not a hearing aid, it's a hearing filter. It only lets you hear good news and compliments."

JUMBLE

Unscramble these four Jumble words to form one letter to each square, to form four ordinary words.



Print answer here: A

Yesterday's Jumbles: AVAIL CRAFT BRIDGE RARELY Answer: A law observed the world over - GRAVITY

Saudia and United seal aviation accord

RIYADH (AFP) — Saudia, the Saudi Arabian Airlines and United Airlines of the United States have signed an accord to operate jointly flights between Jeddah, New York and Los Angeles.

Under the accord, which was signed in the Red Sea port of Jeddah and will come into force on Feb. 18, each airline will operate seat-sharing arrangements, the Saudi airline's deputy director general, Hani Aref, said.

"A widening of this accord to other destinations figures in our plans for the future to strengthen relations between the two carriers," Mr. Aref was quoted as saying by the official Saudi news agency SPA.

Saudi Arabian is the biggest Arab airline, with a fleet of 114 aircraft.

Polish and Israeli companies sign \$400m gas stations deal

TEL AVIV (AP) — Dor Energy of Israel has signed a \$400 million deal with Centralna Produkowa, Poland's state-owned oil company, to build 400 gas stations in Poland over the next five years.

The contract calls for Dor Energy and an anonymous foreign partner to invest \$200 million in the first year to repair existing gas stations and begin construction on new ones.

Dor Energy is part of the Dankner Group, which is looking to expand its investments in Poland.

"Poland, in my eyes, is the young tiger of Europe," group chairman Shmuel Dankner told the Jerusalem Post. "We are looking at widening our infrastructure and other interests. There is very great potential there." The gas station contract will expand Dankner's existing partnerships in Poland, which include a major telecommunications contract with the Polish company R.P. Telekom. "The network of gas stations will be modern with state-of-the-art equipment," said Shmuel Dankner.

AMMAN FINANCIAL MARKET											
HOUSING BANK CENTER AMMAN - SHORT TERM											
TELEPHONE: 371721 / 601718											
ORGANIZED MARKET SHARE PRICE LIST FOR MONDAY 27/01/1997											
PAST 12 MONTHS HIGH	LOW	COMPANY'S NAME	F / E	DIV.	NO. OF TRANS.	NO. OF SHARES	VALUE TRADED JD	OPEN PRICE	CLOSE PRICE	CHANGE	PERCENT
261,000	205,000	ARAB BANK	14.0	1.37	3	160	40880	256.00	255.50	-0.50	-0.20
3,660	2,900	BANK OF JORDAN	11.7	0.00	1	200	650	3.18	3.25	+0.07	+1.77
1,210	880	NIG. EAST INV. BK.	76.2	0.00	6	7700	8803	1.16	1.16	0.00	0.00
2,700	2,120	INDUSTRIAL DEV. BK.	5.3	6.05	4	900	2076	2.33	2.30	-0.03	-1.30
2,950	2,440	JOR. KIDULT BANK	19.7	0.00	3	509	1378	2.67	2.72	+0.05	+3.74
1,090	880	JOR. GULF BANK	5.7	7.29	3	1250	1390	1.96	1.96	0.00	0.00
4,180	3,480	JOR. ISLAMIC BANK	10.2	0.00	6	1350	5110	3.81	3.81	0.00	0.00
3,000	1,380	UNION BK. SAV. INV.	1	0.00	1	200	290	1.45	1.45	0.00	0.00
BANK SECTOR TOTALS											
INDEX: 194.99 %CHG: -0.11 27 12269 60377											
1,830	1,450	JOR. ELECTRIC PWR.	11.2	7.45	19	24850	39825	1.63	1.61	-0.02	-0.12
5,600	4,200	JOR. INTL. HOTELS	18.4	2.76	6	20187	93870	4.60	4.65	+0.05	+0.54
1,520	1,080	NATL. PORTFOLIO	9	0.00	13	3800	4548	1.20	1.20	0.00	0.00
2,250	1,690	UNIFIED CO.	11.1	4.74	12	6900	14501	2.11	2.11	0.00	0.00
1,200	820	UNION LAND DEV.	1	0.00	1	850	714	0.85	0.84	-0.01	-0.11
SERVICE SECTOR TOTALS											
INDEX: 112.15 %CHG: +0.06 53 56637 135326											
3,730	3,060	JOR. CEMENT FACT.	19.6	2.92	8	5889	20137	3.40	3.42	+0.02	+0.22
3,600	2,710	JOR. PHOSPHATE MINES	36.0	0.00	6	15400	52350	3.40	3.35	-0.05	-1.47
6,000	4,950	ARAB POTASH CO.	17.7	3.42	3	1237	1383	5.90	5.84	-0.06	-1.03
10,400	8,720	JOR. PETROL. REFINERY	10.1	8.02	9	900	8996	10.01	9.98	-0.03	-0.30
2,590	1,150	WOOLLEN INDUSTRIES	57.3	0.00	1	4200	5418	1.23	1.29	+0.06	+4.88
4,580	3,040	ARAB RUBBER. HOUSE	19.9	5.51	16	6850	24816	3.65	3.63	-0.02	-0.54
2,120	1,150	JOR. PIPES MANFCT.	8.9	7.50	1	250	400	1.61	1.60	-0.01	-0.62
7,350	4,250	DAR ALDUNA DV. INV.	12.8	4.27	13	2950	13693	4.70	4.68	-0.02	-0.42
5,800	3,130	KAB ALDUNA DV. INV.	9.8	8.45	1	150	533	3.61	3.55	-0.06	-1.66
1,240	670	JO. LIVESTOCK & POULTRY	9	0.00	7	4400	2686	0.62	0.61	-0.01	-1.59
1,020	540	NATIONAL INDS.	9.8	9.09	8	5000	3320	0.67	0.66	-0.01	-1.50
3,730	2,130	NATL. CABLE WIRE. MFAC	15.0	0.00	2	130	369	2.59	2.46	-0.13	-3.11
1,170	670	JOR. STEEL	9	0.00	1	250	400	0.82	0.82	0.00	0.00
1,950	1,050	ARAB PHARM. CHEM.	26.2	0.00	8	2850	4009	1.42	1.40	-0.02	-1.42
1,550	1,080	KANTHER INVEST.	37.0	5.83	2	700	708	1.05	1.03	-0.02	-1.90
3,150	1,950	UNIV. HON. INDS.	5.1	11.90	6	1650	2785	1.71	1.71	0.00	0.00
1,930	1,160	JOR. INDS. RESOURCES	16.3	0.00	7	2250	2925	1.32	1.30	-0.02	-1.51
1,360	840	JOR. NEW CABLE CO.	25.0	0.00	18	14500	13353	0.93	0.92	-0.01	-1.32
2,480	1,750	EL. WY. READY WEAR	9	0.00	4	8600	16820	1.90	1.95	+0.05	+2.63
1,380	1,080	INTL. TOBACCO	29.6	0.00	33	48300	6017	1.26	1.26	0.00	0.00
1,540	930	ONION CH. & VEG.	24.6	0.00	6	2850	2850	1.03	1.00	-0.03	-3.33
INDUSTRIAL SECTOR TOTALS											
INDEX: 116.31 %CHG: -0.67 160 205726 390169											
GRAND TOTAL											
INDEX: 153.54 %CHG: -0.32 240 274632 604073											
PARALLEL MARKET SHARE PRICE LIST FOR MONDAY 27/01/1997											
800	500	JOR. TRADE FAC.	14.1	0.00	3	2500	1325	0.54	0.53	-0.01	-0.18
890	700	UNION INV. 504	68.9	0.00	2	5500	1210	0.72	0.72	0.00	0.00
950	570	ARAB FAN. INVEST.	9	0.00	6	10400	4816	0.47	0.45	-0.02	-4.27
640	300	JOR. INDS. MATCHES-JENCO	9	0.00	17	18250	5175	0.30	0.28	-0.02	-6.52
800	510	ARAB FOOD & MED.	2	0.00	2	2000	1240	0.62	0.62	0.00	0.00
1,690	1,300	NATL. CHLORINE	8	0.00	2	750	1030	1.37	1.38	+0.01	+0.73
860	520	NATL. TEXTILE	9	0.00	5	2500	1150	0.54	0.54	0.00	0.00
920	400	NATL. MOLT. ENG. HAMICO	8	0.00	19	13786	6754	0.49	0.49	0.00	0.00
740	430	NATKAR DIES & HOULDS	8	0.00	6	4600	2487	0.56	0.56	0.00	0.00
990	720	JORDAN STEEL	8	0.00	2	950	722	0.76	0.76	0.00	0.00
760	620	MIDWEST PHARM. 757	8	0.00	1	500	190	0.63	0.63	0.00	0.00
1,330	1,020	UNION TOBACCO 757	8	0.00	5	5000	3900	1.04	1.03	-0.01	-0.97
770	510	RACI PHARM. 657	8	0.00	2	1450	2184	0.61	0.61	0.00	0.00
760	390	JWS. ENG.	27.7	0.00	14	38950	17528	0.45	0.45	0.00	0.00
800	580	PEARL SAN. P. CONV.	8	0.00	3	25000	15750	0.65	0.63	-0.02	-3.08
820	590	NATL. POULTRY	8	0.00	8	12473	9466	0.77	0.77	0.00	0.00
950	530	NIG. EAST COMPLEX	7.6	0.00	15	17250	11213	0.66	0.65	-0.01	-1.51
GRAND TOTAL											
112 161809 84308											

Packers are Super Bowl champs again

NEW ORLEANS (R) — Somewhere Vince Lombardi is smiling — the Green Bay Packers are Super Bowl champions again.

Twenty-nine years after the Lombardi-coached Packers won the last of three consecutive National Football League championships, the sport's most fabled franchise is back on top as Green Bay beat the New England Patriots 35-21 to win Super Bowl XXXI on Sunday.

"It's the Vince Lombardi trophy, so it's going back home," said ecstatic Packers receiver Antonio Freeman, who caught the longest touchdown pass in Super Bowl history — an 81-yard bomb from Green Bay quarterback Brett Favre.

Favre threw two touchdown passes and ran for another to complete a brilliant season in which he was named the league's Most Valuable Player.

But the game's MVP honors went to return specialist Desmond Howard, the former Heisman trophy winner who became the first special teams player to be named Super Bowl MVP.

Howard had a record-setting day, including a spectacular 99-yard kick return for a touchdown late in the third quarter just when it appeared the Patriots had got back into the game.

"He's a great guy, he's rejuvenated his career. That return was unbelievable," said Favre, who completed 14 of 27 passes for 246 yards and did not throw an interception.

Howard returned four kicks for 154 yards and six punts for a Super Bowl record 90 yards more, a total of 244-return yards — also a record.

The 99-yard kick return was the longest in NFL post-season history.

And his first punt return of the game, a 32-yarder, put Green Bay in excellent position to score its first touchdown — a 54-yard pass by Favre to Andre Rison.

"I was so excited when it worked out just the way we practiced it," said Favre. "It hasn't really hit us yet that we're Super Bowl champions."

The victory marked the 13th consecutive win for the National Football Conference team in the Super Bowl. It was also the first title for several veteran players, most notably future Hall of Fame defensive end Reggie White, who sacked new England quarterback Drew Bledsoe three times.

"Now I can sit back with my son for years and watch the highlights of this Super Bowl and he can see daddy getting three sacks," beamed the 12-year veteran.

"Today God was a Green Bay Packer," said White, an ordained minister.

"When I come down from the high I'm on, maybe I'll realize what I did." "I'm really humbled by this experience. This is the greatest group of players I've ever been around," said emotional Green Bay coach Mike Holmgren.

The defeat cost New England's Bill Belichick a chance to become the first coach to win Super Bowls with two different teams. He won twice with the New York Giants.

"No one could be more disappointed than I am because I do think we had



Curtis Martin (C) of the New England Patriots breaks through LeRoy Butler (L) of the Green Bay Packers to score a touchdown in the third quarter of Super Bowl XXXI at the Superdome in New Orleans. The Packers Doug Evans (R) tries to help (Reuters photo)



Green Bay Packers safety Mike Prior flips New England's Shawn Jefferson off his back after intercepting a Drew Bledsoe pass in the second quarter during Super Bowl XXXI (Reuters photo)



Green Bay Packers future Hall of Fame defensive end Reggie White walks across the field with the Lombardi Trophy following the Packers' victory over the New England Patriots in Super Bowl XXXI (Reuters photo)

a chance there for a moment," said Parcells, who is widely expected to leave the Patriots for another coaching job next season.

"You never know when this opportunity is going to come again, so I'm grateful I had the chance to be here," Parcells said.

Conventional wisdom says a team must establish a ball-control running game to win a championship. Green Bay's offense went out the window almost immediately as Favre and Bledsoe took to the air early and often in a classic quarterback duel in the first half.

Bledsoe was red-hot in the first quarter, completing 8-of-15 passes for 123 yards and two touchdowns, the second putting New England ahead 14-10.

But Bledsoe finished with four interceptions, and those turnovers, combined with Howard's heroics, did in the Patriots.

"The Packers made more big plays than we

did...And they basically played a mistake-free football game," said Bledsoe. "My hat's off to them."

The Packers seized the early momentum on Green Bay's second play from scrimmage as Favre found Rison streaking past defender Otis Smith and delivered a perfect touchdown pass. Rison was so far ahead of Smith that he slowed to high-step into the end zone.

Bledsoe's first interception, when Doug Evans stepped in front of Patriots receiver Terry Glenn for the pickoff, led to a 37-yard Chris Jacke field goal and a 10-0 Green Bay lead.

But Bledsoe then went to work, moving his team up the field, and a pass interference penalty by Green Bay's Craig Newsome put the ball on the 1-yard-line.

On the next play, Bledsoe found Keith Byars in the back of the end zone and the Patriots were on the scoreboard.

trailing 10-7. On their next possession, Bledsoe connected with Glenn on a 44-yard pass to the Green Bay 4, and followed it with a touchdown pass to tight end Ben Coates for a 14-10 New England lead with two and a half minutes to go in the first quarter. The lead held up until the first minute of the second quarter when Favre opened a Green Bay drive with his 81-yard bomb to a streaking free man for a 17-14 advantage. The Packers never trailed again.

A 32-yard Jacke field goal with 8:15 left in the half increased Green Bay's lead to 20-14 and the Packers added another touchdown before the half was over.

Green Bay made it 27-14 with 1:11 left in the half when Favre capped a nine-play, 74-yard drive by scrambling for a touchdown from the 2-yard line. The shootout mentality calmed down in the second half as both teams' defenses began asserting

themselves. But the Patriots made another run at the title late in the third quarter. Bledsoe directed an eight-play, 53-yard scoring drive as Curtis Martin barreled 18 yards through the middle of the Green Bay defense for a touchdown that brought New England within 27-21 with 3:27 left in the quarter.

But the New England euphoria was short-lived as Howard took the Adam Vinatieri kickoff and galloped away on his historic run that put a spike through the hearts of Patriot fans.

European soccer roundup

Italian connection inspires Chelsea

LONDON (R) — Chelsea's multi-national team produced one of their most eye-catching displays under manager Ruud Gullit. Italians Gianluca Vialli and Gianfranco Zola supplying three of their goals in a dramatic 4-2 English F.A. Cup win over Liverpool.

Farmer European champions Milan and Benfica also slumped to weekend defeats as the League leaders in Italy (Juventus), Spain (Real Madrid) and France (Mnaccn) all won.

Following is a round-up of the soccer action from around Europe this weekend:

England

Chelsea staged an outstanding comeback to beat Liverpool 4-2 in the fourth round of the F.A. Cup after trailing 2-0 at half-time. Newcastle were knocked out after squandering a 1-0 lead at home in Nottingham Forest, who fought back to win through two goals from Ian Woan.

In Saturday's Cup matches minor league Woking scored with seconds remaining at Premier League Coventry to earn a 1-1 draw. Huddersford, the only other minor league side to the competition, gave Middlesbrough the fight of their lives but eventually went down 3-2.

First division Bradford beat Everton 3-2 at Goodison Park and Second Division Wrexham beat hapless West Ham 1-0 in a third round replay.

Holders Manchester United looked to have secured their passage into the fifth round when they went 1-0 up against Wimbledon after 89 minutes but the Londoners forced a replay with an equaliser deep into injury time.

Italy

Milan's fading hopes of retaining their title all but disappeared after a humiliating 3-1 defeat at second-from-bottom Verona left them 10th.

Arrigo Sacchi's side have now lost seven league matches this season — as many as they have won — and lie eleven points behind leaders Juventus. 3-1 winners over bottom club Reggiana.

Juve's Michele Padovano, playing against his old club, scored one goal and made another to keep the European champions four points clear at the top with 36 points from 18 matches.

Second-place Sampdoria kept Juve in their sights after coming from 2-1 down to defeat Perugia 3-2 thanks to their prolific front-line partnership of Vincenzo Montella and Roberto Mancini, both of whom scored twice.

Vicenza, convincing 3-2 winners over Fiorentina, moved into third.

Spain

Brazilian striker Ronaldo celebrated his FIFA world player of the year award with a first-half hat-trick as Barcelona thrashed Rayo Vallecano 6-0 on Sunday. Barcelona stay second in the Spanish championship, three points behind Real

Madrid, who were led to a 4-0 victory over Celta Vigo by another Brazilian, defender Roberto Carlos.

With the nearest challenger now seven points adrift, the league title again looks like a two-club race. Third-placed Deportivo Coruna lost 1-0 at bottom club Extremadura on Saturday, while Real Sociedad went down by the same score in the dying moments of their game at struggling Logrones.

The game between Tenerife and sixth-placed Atletico Madrid was postponed after 10 members of the champions' squad caught gastro-enteritis.

France

Mnaccn stretched their lead at the top of the French League to seven points with a 2-0 win over their nearest rivals Paris Saint-Germain.

Marseille dented in-form Bastia's title hopes by beating them 1-0. Bastia had won seven of their eight previous matches.

Portugal

Benfica, without suspended captain Joao Pinto, lost 2-1 at home to Belemenses and slip to third in the table. It was their third consecutive defeat and earned them boos from their home fans.

Sporting beat Boavista 3-1 at home to go second. Reigning champions Porto, who meet Gil Vicente on Monday, are 10 points clear and look to have the title safely in their grasp.

Rodman gets Converse contract

WASHINGTON (AFP) — Dennis Rodman, suspended from professional basketball for kicking a cameraman, nonetheless received a multiyear contract to promote Converse sports shoes.

Terms of the deal announced Sunday with the Chicago Bulls' star forward were not disclosed.

"We look forward to Dennis' imminent return to the NBA and the world champion Chicago Bulls," Converse Vice President James Solomon said in a statement.

"He is one of the best defensive players in the league who has a passion and commitment for the true essence of the game of basketball and who is recognised for his raw, emotional style on the court."

Rodman, who has been suspended without pay for at least 11 games and fined for kicking a court-side cameraman, said last week he will play for free to make amends in response to a plea from President Bill Clinton.

He reached an out-of-court settlement for \$200,000 with cameraman Eugene Amos whom he kicked in the groin during a game in Minneapolis last week.

But he has been suspended without pay for at least 11 games by the National Basketball Association and fined \$25,000 dollars for his behaviour.

SPORTS IN BRIEF

Cantona dives out

LONDON (AFP) — Eric Cantona, vital to Manchester United's bid for the FA Cup and English Premiership, will be out for two games after being booked for diving to Saturday's FA Cup fourth round draw with Wimbledon. The booking took him past 21 disciplinary points, which automatically incurred a two-match ban. It is Cantona's first suspension since being suspended for eight months for his kung-fu attack on a Crystal Palace supporter at Selhurst park two years ago. Cantona will miss the fifth round FA Cup home tie against QPR if United win next week's replay against Wimbledon, as well as the Premiership game at Arsenal on February 19. If United are knocked out of the Cup by Wimbledon, he will miss the Arsenal game and the visit to Chelsea on February 22.

Bartova beats indoor record

REYKJAVIK (AFP) — Czech pole vaulter Daniela Bartova beat her own European indoor record last weekend when she cleared 4.31 metres at a 90-year anniversary competition of Icelandic athletics in Reykjavik. Bartova, whose previous record was 4.30m, then had three close attempts at the world record of 4.41m.

Prost aiming for Melbourne

PARIS (AFP) — Former four-times world champion Alain Prost, trying to buy out Ligier, hopes to line up a new Formula One motor racing team at the Australian Grand Prix which opens the season at Melbourne in March. "But there is still a long way to go in a very complex business project," he told the sports daily L'Equipe.

Inter eye Monaco defender

MONACO (AFP) — Italian side Inter Milan have approached Monaco about defender Patrick Blondeau but the French League leaders are unlikely to let the newly-capped defender go. Italian clubs have until Jan. 31 to beat the transfer deadline.

Marseille rule out Pedros move

MARSEILLE (AFP) — Olympique Marseille general manager Jean-Michel Roussier has ruled out a transfer of French international forward Reynald Pedros to Italian side Parma. "Nobody has made a firm bid," he said. Marseille have put a 25 million franc (\$5million) price tag on Pedros, who has been having an unhappy time at Marseille since his close-season move from Nantes. He was booted off when substituted in the French league match against Bastia on Saturday.

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CINEMA TEL:634144
PHILADELPHIA "2"Michael Douglas &
Ellie Ping... in
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PRESIDENT

Shows: 12:30, 3:00, 6:30, 8:30, 10:30

CINEMA TEL:699238
PLRZAKeanu Reeves & Dolph
Lundgren...in
Johnny Mnemonic

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when they... against... Londoners... with an... injury...

...hopes of... all but... a butterfly... at second... left...

...side have... league... as... won... 3-1... without... club...

...diving... 3-2... Fiorentina... in...

...er Ronaldo... world... year... award... had... as... shed... Ravelo... several... championship... should... Real...

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...rule out Pedros move...

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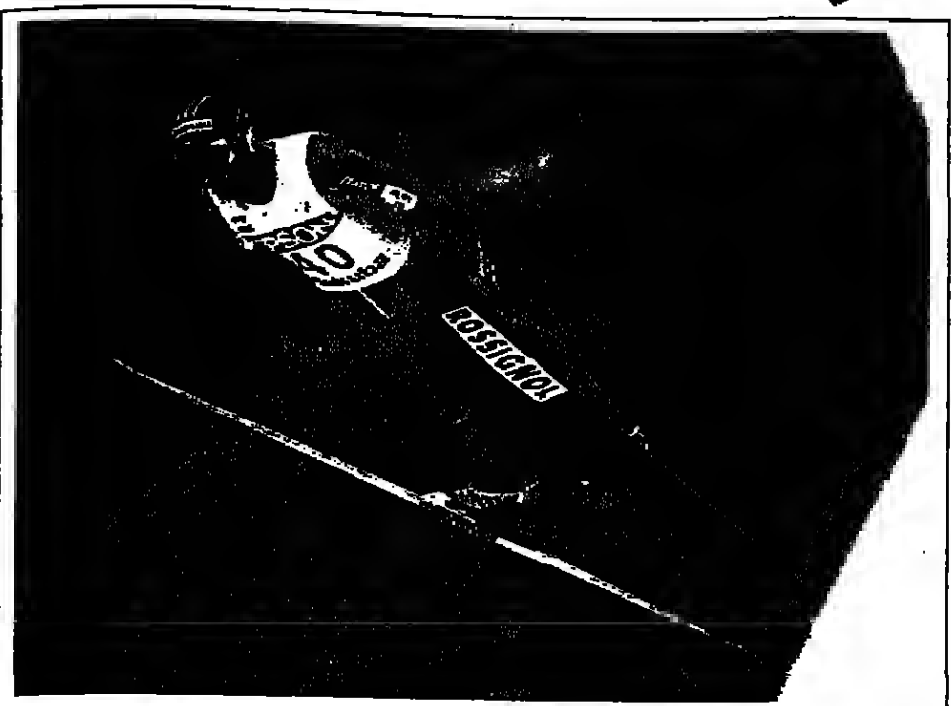
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Adam Malysz of Poland soars in the air to win the large hill event in World Cup ski jumping in Hakuba. Malysz won the World Cup jumping event with 246.7 points against stiff competition from Japanese athletes (Reuters photo)

Tomba, Compagnoni lead the way

CORTINA D'AMPEZZO, Italy (R) — Italy's Olympic skiing heroes Alberto Tomba and Deborah Compagnoni gave their nation what it wanted to see on Sunday, a week before the spotlight falls on the World Championships in Italy.

Tomba, a triple Olympic and double world champion, brought signs of relief all round with a storming second place in a men's slalom in Kitzbuehel on Sunday.

After a season fraught with injury and illness, the 30-year-old Italian showman demonstrated he can still mix with the best and is not about to be written off.

Compagnoni, herself a double Olympic gold medalist and reigning world giant slalom champion, showed she is hitting the form of her life by winning a giant in Cortina.

It was the first world cup win of her career in Italy — but the third successive first place this month — and an excellent omen for the future if any were needed.

If anyone doubted that skiing on home snow gives an enormous boost, five of the six men's and women's World Cup races at the weekend went to skiers from the home country. Mario Reiter and Fritz Strobl, weekend winners at Kitzbuehel, did the business for Austria with only Frenchman Luc Alphand spoiling the fun with a downhill win.

In Italy, the three women's races all had Italian winners although Isolde Kostner bad to share the downhill glory with Switzerland's Heidi Zurbriegen in a rare tie.

But it was Tomba, a man who hates coming second, who delighted the fans with his runner-up slot.

He has competed in only five races this season, finished just three and been second twice.

"I could have won this race seeing as how I was only 19 hundredths of a second behind. And that on a soft piste, the opposite of what is needed to attack," Tomba said.

Compagnoni's victory rounded off a remarkable week for the Italian women's team whose skiers have now won five of the last six races and a total of eight so far this season.

Kostner, the world Super-G champion, sounded a note of caution after following up her downhill win with the Super-G on Saturday. She warned that soaring expectations could lead to unbearable pressure on the skiers.

The only negative note was news that Sabina Panzanini, winner of two giant slaloms this season, is suffering from an Achilles injury. Officials said they had no doubt she would be ready to race at the championships.

Others at Cortina were not so lucky. Germany's Martina Ertl, the World Cup giant slalom champion, crashed in downhill training and damaged her knee. Slovenia's Urška Hrovat fell in Sunday's giant almost at the finish line and tore the cruciate ligaments in a knee.

Both were ruled out of the championships.

Violence mars African Nations Cup qualifiers

JOHANNESBURG (AFP) — Violence marred a disappointing second qualifying round for the 1998 African Nations Cup this weekend with five players sent off and 11 matches producing only 19 goals.

Senegal and Egypt were reduced to 10 men in Dakar when Ousmane Diop and Ali Maher got red cards with seven minutes left of a goalless clash in which the pharaohs displayed little inclination to attack.

Guinean Maurice Camara and Tunisian Mounir Boukadida received marching orders during the second-half in Conakry, where a 50th-minute goal from Abdou Salam Sow sent local fans home happy.

Minnows Namibia will leave Cameroon with few pleasant memories after conceding four goals, having four players cautioned and Mohammed Husein expelled for a second bookable offence.

When Mali scored the only goal against Algeria in Bamako a mini-riot developed involving players and officials and the Senegalese referee took several minutes to restore order.

The violence further dented the image of a competition hit by the withdrawals of Sudan and the Central African Republic and the failure of Ethiopia to fulfill a fixture in Morocco.

Most of the Ethiopian team sought political asylum during a stopover in Italy, forcing the rest of the party to return home. A decision on whether the east Africans will remain in the cup is expected soon.

Cameroon and Mozambique were the only teams to find the net frequently with Patrick Mboma and Jean-Jacques Misse-Misse scoring twice each for the indomitable

lions in Yaounde.

Veteran Portuguese-based forward Chiquinho Conde triggered the rout of Mauritius in Maputo with an early second-half goal followed by late strikes from Sergio Matsolo and Andre Macamo.

With a third of the qualifying programme complete, only Guinea, Mali, Togo and Zambia boast 100 per cent records while Benin, Ethiopia, Tanzania and Mauritius appear out of the running.

Zambia discovered there is life after Kalusha Bwalya and regained lost pride with a 2-0 victory over Malawi on a Blantyre pitch made treacherous by pre-match rain.

Former African footballer of the year Bwalya did not play following criticism by team-mates of his privileged position and media allegations that he wielded too much influence over coach Freddie Mwila.

National players claimed Kalusha travelled business class while other professionals were given economy tickets and was the only footballer not to share a hotel room.

Injured AC Milan star George Weah was sorely missed by Liberia, who slumped to surprise Group 6 pacesetters Togo despite taking an early lead through Jonathan Soghie.

Bruce Grobbelaar took time off from facing match-fixing charges in England to play for Zimbabwe in a 0-0 draw with Ghana that took an unusual turn just before half-time.

A swarm of bees invaded the packed national stadium, leaving players and match officials crawling towards the exits with shirts covering their heads and many spectators panicking. The insects soon left, but

poor shooting continued to plague Zimbabwe and when they did look like breaking the deadlock, goalkeeper Simon Addo or the woodwork got in the way.

Having survived the onslaught, the black stars almost snatched victory in the closing stages, but the finishing of veteran midfielder Abedi Pele left much to be desired.

Ivory Coast, champions in 1992 and third two years later, continue to struggle with an early Guel Tchiresoua goal giving them an unsatisfactory success over little Benin.

Hosts Burkina Faso and defending champions South Africa automatically qualify for the finals and will be joined by the winners and runners-up of the seven groups.

Moya enters 'top-ten' in latest ATP rankings

PARIS (AFP) — Spain's Australian Open finalist Carlos Moya enters the 'top-ten' of the ATP tennis rankings for the first time today.

Moya, who was in 25th place before the Grand Slam event in Melbourne, is now up in ninth place just behind South African Wayne Ferreira.

Pete Sampras, who won the Australian Open, is comfortably clear of second-placed Goran Ivanisevic of Croatia, third-placed Thomas Muster of Austria and fourth-placed fellow-American Michael Chang.

- Latest ATP rankings:
1. Pete Sampras 5774
 2. Goran Ivanisevic 3566
 3. Thomas Muster 3492
 4. Michael Chang 3417
 5. Y. Kafelnikov 3367
 6. Richard Krajicek 2371
 7. Marcelo Rios 2329
 8. Wayne Ferreira 2221
 9. Carlos Moya 2171
 10. Thomas Enqvist 2086
 11. Albert Costa 2036
 12. A. Agassi 1948
 13. Boris Becker 1931
 14. Todd Martin 1840
 15. Felix Mantilla 1688
 16. Tim Henman 1587
 17. Stefan Edberg 1561
 18. M. Gustafsson 1537
 19. Michael Stich 1516
 20. A. Berasategui 1477

Karlsson dominates short course cup

MALMO, Sweden (R) — Sweden's "Lobster" Karlsson equalled her own 100 metres individual medley short course world record at a World Cup meeting on Sunday.

The 22-year-old Swede recorded a time of one minute 01.03 seconds, three seconds ahead of Danish runner-up Britta Vestergaard, and appears to be back to her 1992 form when she set the world record at Espoo, Finland.

She also won the 50 metres breaststroke in 31.63 seconds, finishing over a second ahead of Britain's Jaime King.

Finland's Vesa Hanaki added to Nordic delight by winning the men's 100 metres butterfly in 53.40 seconds.

Klim headed a strong Australian team which dominated the two-day event, and won the men's 200 metres freestyle in 1:45.99 — nearly a second ahead of Sweden's former world record holder Anders Holmertz.

The Australians cheered Natasha Bowron to victory over China's Guo Wei in the 400 metres freestyle and Matthew Dunn and Robert Van der Zant were first and second in the men's 200 metres medley.

Jordan becomes first to win 2 million NBA All-Star votes

NEW YORK (AFP) — Michael Jordan became the first player in the history of the National Basketball Association to tally more than 2 million votes in fan balloting for the All-Star game, the league said Sunday.

The 46th annual NBA All-Star game will be played at Gund Arena in Cleveland on February 9.

Jordan led all NBA vote-getters for the eighth time in his career with 2,451,136, and is the all-time leader in votes received with over 12 million in his career.

He will be joined in the east starting lineup by Orlando Magic guard Penny Hardaway, Detroit Pistons forward Grant Hill, Bulls forward Scottie Pippen and New York Knicks centre Patrick Ewing.

Hill, who led all players in votes received in 1995 and 1996, collected 1,868,020 votes this year and was followed at forward by Pippen's 1,683,596.

Chicago's Dennis Rodman, who is suspended at least through the all-star game for kicking a cameraman, finished third with 887,483.

Hardaway, who has been limited to just 15 games due to injury, finished with



Chicago Bulls star Michael Jordan

1,132,024 votes. Ewing hested Alonzo Mourning of the Miami Heat, 1,395,759 to 1,041,570, for the starting job.

In the west, forwards Charles Barkley of the

Houston Rockets and Shawn Kemp of the Seattle SuperSonics were the top vote-getters.

Joining Barkley and Kemp, who will start together for the third straight year, in the starting lineup are Houston centre Hakeem Olajuwon, Seattle guard Gary Payton and Utah Jazz guard John Stockton.

Barkley was the top vote-getter in the west with 1,877,232, followed closely by Kemp's 1,713,049.

Olajuwon compiled 1,487,310 votes, just ahead of Shaquille O'Neal of the Los Angeles Lakers, who had 1,305,941.

Payton collected 1,206,539 votes, while Stockton came in with 1,127,250.

This is the 12th All-Star selection for Olajuwon, the 11th for Barkley, ninth for Stockton, fifth for Kemp and fourth for Payton.

NBA head coaches will vote for the remaining members of the All-Star teams in their respective conferences, and their selections will be announced later this week.

Lakers win in Seattle to take division lead

SEATTLE (R) — The young Los Angeles Lakers took sole possession of first place in the Pacific Division Sunday, edging the Western Conference champion Seattle SuperSonics by a single point, 104-103.

Nick Van Exel, 25, scored 25 points, Eddie Jones, also 25, added 23 points and 24-year-old Shaquille O'Neal had 22 and 11 rebounds for the Lakers, who blew a 21-point first-half lead but beat the Sonics for the second time in as many meetings this season.

"It was a playoff game," Los Angeles coach Del Harris said. "Of course, we'll have fans that won't like it because we had a 21-point lead and only won by one point. But that's just something we'll have to deal with."

Gary Payton had 25 points and Detlef Schrempf added 18 for Seattle, which dropped its second straight game and saw its 11-game home winning streak snapped. Seattle tied the game for the final time at 100-100 on Terry Cummings' three-pointer. But 18-year-old Kobe Bryant answered with an eight-footer and Jones made a pair of free throws with 1:07 remaining for a 104-103 edge.

Sam Perkins missed a three-pointer, but Cummings stole the ball from Van Exel and Payton converted a three-point play to cut the Laker lead to 104-103 with 30 seconds left.

Seattle got the ball back after a Los Angeles missed shot went out of bounds, but Hersey Hawkins missed a three-point try at the buzzer.

The Lakers had built a 32-22 lead in the first quarter which swelled as high as 51-30 before standing at 62-51 at halftime. But Payton scored 11 points in the third quarter as the Sonics cut the deficit to 83-80.

Seattle scored the first four points of the fourth to take its first lead of the game at 84-83. Seattle led for the final time at 92-90 with 7:56 to play, but Van Exel hit a three and O'Neal had three straight points to give Los Angeles a 96-93 lead with 5:45 to go.

"I got a lot of good looks when they double-teamed," Van Exel said. "This was a big game because it was Seattle and everybody was watching." Recently acquired Robert Horry finished with 12 points for the Lakers, who shot 46.5 per cent (40-for-86) from the field. Rookie Travis Knight, 22, grabbed eight rebounds for Los Angeles, helping them to a 45-35 rebounding advantage. "The Lakers came out and jumped into the game better than we did," Seattle coach George Karl said. "And offensively we started forcing the ball against their size. Rebounding the ball, we were awful in the first half and not much better in the second."

Shawn Kemp had 15 points and 13 rebounds before fouling out for Seattle, which fell to 8-8 against teams with .500 or better records.

In another key divisional battle in New York, Patrick Ewing had 24 points and 10 rebounds and Allan Houston added two clutch three-pointers as the Knicks defeated former coach Pat Riley a fourth time in the All-Star game with a 95-89 victory over the Miami Heat.

Houston scored 17 points and Charles Oakley added 16 points and 11 rebounds for New York, which extended its home winning streak to 14 games since a 99-75 loss to the Heat on December 3. The Knicks are 18-2 at home all-time against Miami.

"We wanted to go out and definitely get this one," Ewing said. "We know

Miami is a good team, they are playing well and leading the division, so we wanted to make sure we could get the win."

"I'm usually picked by the coaches, but now I'm back in the starting lineup," Ewing said about being named to the All-Star team as a starter. "It feels good. I'm very happy and looking forward to going. It means a lot."

Riley, who coached the Knicks from 1991-95, was denied a bid as coach of the Eastern Conference All-Star team. The Heat (30-12) fell a half-game behind idle Detroit (30-11) for the second-best record in the east.

Pistons coach Doug Collins will coach the east All-Star team. Phil Jackson, who has coached the Chicago Bulls to the league's best record this season, coached last year's team and is ineligible.

Alonzo Mourning scored 22 points despite foul trouble and P.J. Brown and Isaac Austin added 14 apiece for the Heat, who fell to 20-6 on the road. Miami has lost 22 of its last 28 games with the Knicks. In Milwaukee, Glenn Robinson scored 19 points and pulled down 12 rebounds to lead the Bucks to a 94-76 victory over the San Antonio Spurs.

Johnny Newman added 18 points and Armon Gilliam had 15 points and 10 boards for Milwaukee, which has won consecutive games after dropping four of five.

The Bucks, who never trailed, played without star forward Vin Baker, who suffered back spasms prior to the game.

Carl Herrera recorded a season-high 22 points and 11 rebounds for San Antonio, which has lost nine of its last 11.

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Beirut police, squatters clash; at least 18 injured

BEIRUT (Agencies) — Thirteen policemen and five squatters were reported injured Monday in clashes over dynamiting to make way for a road underpass in a midtown Beirut neighborhood.

The clash in the Qantari Hotel district, an area devastated during the 1975-90 civil war, began in the morning when squatters threw bottles and rocks at construction workers to block explosives from being readied for use.

Helmeted riot police, carrying shields and batons, were called in. A clash ensued and 13 policemen, including an officer, suffered light to moderate injuries, police Captain Mohammad Sharara said at the scene.

Squatters said five women were injured, including one hit on the head with a baton. The squatters claim the blasting can damage the already shaky, war-damaged buildings where they live.

The re were no reports of arrests. By mid-morning, at least 70 policemen surrounded the site, sandwiched between the burnt-out hulk of the Holiday Inn hotel and the 40-storey Beirut Trade Centre tower, the capital's tallest building about 500 metres away.

Three fire engines stood by, ready to intervene with high pressure hoses to control the crowd. Armed policemen took up positions on rooftops and behind the riot police, but no shots were fired.

But the situation calmed after workers finished dynamiting all charges planned for the day. A police officer at the scene said controlled explosions to clear rocky terrain would continue through Thursday.

Policemen confiscated film of the trouble from two news photographers. Ali Khalil, a Shiite member of parliament for southern Lebanon, mediated between police and the squatters.

"The siege has provoked the squatters," he said, maintaining that "the explosions threaten people's lives."

The dispute began several days when squatters, about 700 Shiites mainly from an Israeli-occupied border strip in southern Lebanon, blocked the construction work, claiming the blasting was hazardous to their homes.

Officials of Solidere, the \$1 billion company entrusted with rebuilding the downtown district, could not be immediately reached for comment.

Most of the squatters in Beirut's war-devastated downtown have been compensated and cleared from buildings. However, some

remain amid the reconstruction work, awaiting government compensation which has been delayed by lack of funds.

Abdul Hamid Nasser, an official of the fund for the displaced, confirmed that the squatters were refugees from South Lebanon who were refusing to evacuate their houses.

"All they really want is to double or triple the amount of compensation they are due to be paid and which they have so far refused to receive," the official said.

Mr. Nasser said all families from the border zone were allocated \$8,000 — \$3,000 more than other displaced families — to evacuate, the apartments they have been occupying since the 1975-1990 civil war.

"They have refused to cooperate and last week they also threw stones at workers. All this is to try to get more money, but we cannot accept this," the official said.

The fund is charged with paying compensation to more than half a million displaced. It has so far paid off 40 per cent of them, sometimes at high prices which benefit senior members of political parties.

"The operation 'return of the displaced' has cost \$434 million up until the end of 1996. It is financed mostly through foreign loans.



DEMAND FOR PRISONER RELEASE: Palestinian women demonstrate outside the Palestinian Legislative Council compound in Gaza on Monday demanding that the Palestinian National Authority exert pressure on Israel to release their sons from Israeli jails. The demonstrators tried to break into the building but Palestinian security prevented them. Large number of Palestinians are held in Israeli prisons. Israel is expected to release some of them on the occasion of Eid Al Fitr which is due after two weeks (AFP photo)

Syria says Saudis back its stand in peace talks

RIYADH (Agencies) — Syrian Foreign Minister Farouq Al Sharaa said here Monday that Saudi Arabia supported Syria's conditions for the resumption of stalled peace talks with Israel.

Mr. Sharaa, on a tour of Gulf states and Yemen with Syrian Vice-President Abdul Halim Khaddam, said that Riyadh offered its support to Syria during a "positive and friendly" meeting with King Fahd late Sunday.

"The Saudis reiterated their support for the Syrian position, which demands a restarting of the negotiations (with Israel) at the point where they ended following a commitment to a withdrawal from the Golan," Mr. Sharaa told AFP.

Syria insists that negotiations with the Jewish state, on ice since February last year, must be restarted at the point where they were broken off with the previous Labour government in Israel.

Damascus said Labour made a verbal commitment to hand back the Golan Heights, which Israel seized during the 1967 war and "annexed" in 1981, and which Syria insists must be returned under any peace deal.

The new right-wing Israeli government of Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu has called for talks with Syria to restart "without pre-conditions" and has suggested Damascus bring the issue of the Golan to the negotiating table.

However, at the same time Mr. Netanyahu has firmly ruled out handing back the strategic plateau.

The Israeli newspaper Haaretz reported that the United States had secretly freed Israel from the Labour commitment on the Golan in a letter to Mr. Netanyahu.

An Arab diplomat added that the Syrian

envoys were trying to drum up Arab support to cope with "pressure exerted by the Americans to resume the negotiations from zero."

In remarks published Monday by the Arabic newspaper Al Hayat, Mr. Sharaa said there "was no initiative for now to resume the negotiations" with Israel and that the situation was "completely blocked."

Mr. Sharaa also denied "any direct or indirect contact with Israel."

The Israeli foreign ministry has said the two countries exchanged diplomatic messages as part of a search for a formula to help restart the talks.

Mr. Khaddam and Mr. Sharaa later on Monday flew on to Kuwait where they met the emir, Sheikh Jaber Al Ahmad Al Sabah, and delivered a message from President Hafez Al Assad, the official Kuwaiti News Agency (KUNA) reported.

The Syrian officials are also due to visit Bahrain, Oman, Qatar, United Arab Emirates and Yemen.

Most Gulf Arab states have made any normalisation with Israel conditional on progress in the Syrian-Israeli track of the Middle East peace process, although Qatar and Oman agreed last year to exchange trade missions.

Qatar and Oman froze their fledgling ties with the Jewish state late last year after the Palestinian-Israeli talks stalled, but Oman said it was ready to renew contacts after Israel redeployed from the West Bank town of Hebron.

Arab diplomats in Riyadh added that Mr. Khaddam and Mr. Sharaa might ask the Gulf countries to maintain their decision to freeze contacts until there is progress on the Syrian track.

Ambassador Shamir to quit post in February

By a Jordan Times Staff Reporter

AMMAN — Israeli Ambassador to Jordan Shimon Shamir will leave his post at the end of February when a two-year agreement he signed with the Israeli foreign ministry expires, an embassy spokesman said Monday.

Spokesman Shalom Touegman rejected as untrue suggestions that Mr. Shamir's departure was differences between the ambassador and the government of Benjamin Netanyahu.

"There is no political reason behind the ambassador's decision to request the foreign ministry to be relieved of his duties at the end of the two-year contract he signed" when the late Israeli Prime Minister Yitzhak Rabin asked him to take up the post, Mr. Touegman told the Jordan Times.

Ambassador Shamir, in line with the agreement, wrote to the foreign ministry about six weeks ago that his contract was finishing at the end of February and that he wished to return to the academic life at Tel Aviv University, said the spokesman.

Mr. Shamir was appointed in March 1995 by the previous government headed by the left-leaning Labour Party after Jordan and Israel signed their October 1994 peace treaty.

Mr. Shamir, a Princeton University graduate, taught modern Middle East history at Tel Aviv University for five years before he came to Jordan. In 1988-1990, he served as ambassador to Egypt, where he established the Israeli academic centre to promote scientific and intellectual dialogue between Egyptians and Israelis.

According to reports in the Israeli press, Oded Eran, deputy director-general of the economic affairs department of the foreign ministry, is one of the candidates to replace Mr. Shamir in Amman.

Mr. Touegman's comments confirmed a report carried by the Jerusalem-based Al Quds Press that Mr. Shamir had said in his request to the foreign ministry that his reasons to quit the post was personal.

Mr. Shamir himself told Israeli Radio that there were no political reasons behind his refusal to renew his contract.

The Israeli daily Maariv, quoting foreign ministry sources, said that no one within the ministry had tried to convince Mr. Shamir to renew his current contract so as to extend his term.

The paper also reported that one of the candidates for Mr. Shamir's replacement was Mr. Eran and that if Mr. Eran refused the position, the Israeli government would find another candidate closer to the ruling Likud Party.

Woman seeking luck gored by elephant

BANGKOK (R) — A frightened male elephant gored a pregnant woman in the thigh while she was crawling under his belly for good luck, Thai police said on Monday. They said the jittery pachyderm attacked Wien Sudpleum, who is eight months pregnant, on Saturday as she was beginning her third trip under his belly. She was crawling under the elephant in the hope it would bring her luck and allow an easy delivery of her baby, said police in Phantum Thani, about 50 kilometres north of Bangkok. Instead, she landed in hospital with a thigh injury after the elephant, frightened by barking dogs, gored her with his tusks. The mahout taking care of the elephant was arrested briefly and released after he agreed to pay 6,000 baht (\$240) compensation to the injured woman, police said. Many Thais believe if they crawl three times under the belly of an elephant, considered a noble animal, they will have good luck.

10 Commandments for British vicars

LONDON (R) — British church officials leapt to the defence of priests who cannot rattle off all 10 Commandments, saying it was substance not words that counted. A poll by the Sunday Times found only 34 per cent of 200 Anglican priests polled could recite all 10 without help. "When people are put on the spot like this of course they can't remember," a Church of England spokesman said. "Given time they would recall them." The poll found that most clergy knew the commandments prohibiting adultery and coveting one's neighbour's wife, but got a little fuzzy on the details of some of the other eight. John Redwood, an outspoken Conservative member of parliament, said he was amazed at the clergy's ignorance.

Germans faithful to surnames

BONN (R) — Thousands of Germans are keeping unfortunate surnames such as Kotz (vomit), Moerder (murder), Bratuhn (roast chicken) and even Hider, even though they could legally change them, a magazine reported. The German phonebook lists hundreds of people with the surname Faul (lazy), Fett (fat), Dreckmann (filth-man), Dumm (stupid) and Schwein (pig). The weekly Focus magazine said in an advance release ahead of publication. Unflatteringly named Germans said that they mainly had problems with their names as children and that later in life they had decided not to bow to social pressure to change them.

Family takes out asking not to be robbed

LEON, Mexico (R) — A Mexican family took out a newspaper advertisement asking crooks to please stop robbing the family. "Mister robbers, you have cleaned us out... please do not visit us anymore, it's not worth your while," the Robles family wrote in a newspaper ad in the central Mexican state of Guanajuato. The ad recounts how the Robles family was held up in a local restaurant on Dec. 27, losing their money and jewels. A month later, two armed robbers held up the family again in their home, taking nearly everything of value. "The only things we have left is our refrigerator, our television set and a VCR," the family said.

'U.S. more favourable to Israeli arms requests'

TEL AVIV (AFP) — The U.S. Defence Department has warned to Israeli arms requests since the recent agreement on Hebron which put the Israeli-Palestinian peace process back on track, a senior Israeli military official was quoted Monday as saying. "The positive climate created by the Hebron agreement has made it easier for Israel to obtain U.S. military goods," the independent daily Haaretz quoted the anonymous officer as saying.

The officer was speaking following talks in Washington between the Israeli deputy army chief of staff, General Matan Vilnai, and U.S. defence officials responsible for military aid to the Jewish state.

Among other develop-

ments, Haaretz said, the United States agreed to move up delivery of several weapons systems from 1999 to next year, including Blackhawk helicopters and SAAR-5 patrol boats.

Israel receives \$1.8 billion in U.S. military aid each year.

After months of U.S.-brokered negotiations, Israel and the Palestinian National Authority finally agreed on Israel's long-delayed troop withdrawal from Hebron on Jan. 15.

The agreement and subsequent Israeli pullback from most of the West Bank city was the first breakthrough in the peace process since the right-wing government of Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu was elected to office in May.

Egypt allows in expellees on health grounds

CAIRO (AP) — Egypt allowed 10 Palestinians who have been stranded in a no-man's land on the Egyptian-Libyan border to enter Egypt on Monday for medical treatment, a U.N. official said.

The Palestinians evacuated from a make-shift desert camp include pregnant women and people with heart conditions, said Panos Momtzis, spokesman for the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) in Cairo.

"They were in critical condition because they have been stranded at the border for 16 months in conditions that are really unfit for humans to live," Mr. Momtzis said.

He gave no other details of the Palestinians' conditions. The 10 Palestinians bring to 13 those who have been evacuated from the camp to Egypt for medical treatment, Mr. Momtzis said. Twelve other people in the camp are still in need of medical attention, suffering from such illnesses as diabetes and asthma.

Libyan leader Muammar Qadhafi threw hundreds of Palestinians out of his country in 1994 to prove that the Israeli-Palestinian peace accords were a sham since millions of Palestinian refugees had no guarantee of return home.

Many became trapped on the border because they had no proper papers to enter other countries, and Libya refused to take them back.

About 150 remain in the camp, trapped in a trash-strewn strip infested with scorpions. They are facing another cold winter in the desert, where temperatures reach freezing levels at night.

Last week, the Palestinians hurled stones at Libyan officials who tried to bring the camp residents back to Libya. The camp residents have several times refused Libyan invitations to return, fearing they would go back and find no jobs or houses to live in.

Hizbollah predicts new Israeli assault

BEIRUT (R) — The leader of the pro-Iranian Hizbollah group was quoted on Monday as saying Israel might launch a wide-scale attack against guerrillas and Syrian troops in Lebanon.

Sheikh Hassan Nasrallah, secretary-general of the Shi'ite Muslim group, said the aim of such a military campaign would be to impose Israel's conditions for the resumption of the suspended peace talks with Beirut and Damascus.

"Hoping to force Lebanon and Syria back to negotiations under its conditions, Israel might resort to a wide-scale aggression if it proves to be the only and best means (to reach the goal)," Sheikh Nasrallah, told Al-Safir newspaper in an interview.

He said Israel's "obstinacy in peace talks... and the addition of hundreds of millions of dollars to the Israeli defence budget indicate that everything in Israel is going in the direction of a war."

Sheikh Nasrallah said the possible military operation would be larger than an April 1996 Israeli blitz on Lebanon but smaller than the 1982 all-out Israeli invasion. Last April, Israel killed more than 200 people in air, sea and land bombardment.

The Shi'ite Muslim cleric said a possible scenario for an Israeli blitz would include air raids on Syrian troops in Lebanon, on Hizbollah and even on the "Lebanese army" in an attempt to dismantle it.

Syria has 35,000 troops deployed across two-thirds of Lebanon and is the country's main power broker.

Sheikh Nasrallah, however, warned that such an Israeli attack "could open the door for a regional war."

"Israel will be taking a risk (by hitting Syrian targets in Lebanon) because it will not be able to predict the Syrian reaction to such attack aimed at its direct military presence on the Lebanese platform," he said.

Asked to comment on growing expectations of a possible Israeli strike on Syria, Sheikh Nasrallah said: "A war on Syria inside Syria does not change the equation. It changes the region, because such a move might blow up the whole peace process."

Hizbollah (party of God) leads a guerrilla war to oust Israeli troops from a 15-kilometre South Lebanon occupation zone. In 1996, Hizbollah guerrillas killed 27 Israeli soldiers inside the buffer zone.

Peace talks between Lebanon and Israel — launched in 1991 — have been suspended for nearly three years. Talks between Syria and Israel, stalled over withdrawal from the Israeli occupied Golan Heights and the nature of future ties, have been suspended for 11 months.

NEWS IN BRIEF

Syrians allowed to subscribe to Internet

DAMASCUS (AFP) — Syrians will be able to subscribe to the Internet in six months, the official Tishrin newspaper said Monday, adding that Syria has set up its own Internet site. The site has about 150 subscribers from the political, economic, social and cultural sectors and offers information on Syrian civilisation and culture, the press said. However, average Syrians will be able to get online in six months, Tishrin said.

Militants kill Egyptian ex-policeman

CAIRO (AP) — Suspected militants Monday shot to death a retired policeman who they suspected was informing on extremist activities in southern Egypt, police said. The victim was identified as 50-year-old Toony Mahmoud Abdul Rahman, said police officials, speaking under customary rules of anonymity. He was shot as he got into a car at his farm near Malawi, 260 kilometres south of Cairo. The assailants fled, and a search was being conducted for them. More than 1,000 people have died in violence since radicals began an anti-government campaign in 1992. The radicals want to overthrow President Hosni Mubarak's secular regime and replace it with strict Islamic rule.

3 killed, 3 injured in grenade blast in Turkey

ANKARA (AFP) — Three people, including two children, were killed and three others injured when a grenade discovered by a group of children in the southeast region of Geng exploded, the Anatolia news agency reported on Monday. The agency said the children began playing with the grenade and tossing it around after finding it in an empty field. The region of Geng, in the province of Bingol, is at the centre of the 13-year-old conflict between Kurdish rebels seeking a independent homeland and government troops.

Saudi lawyer gets forensic data on Dhahran murder

DUBAI (R) — The Saudi lawyer of two British nurses charged with murder in the kingdom has received the forensic medical report on the killing and expects the final police report in the next few days, newspapers said on Monday.

The reports are considered key elements in the case and could pave the way for the trial of Deborah Pary, 41, and Lucille McLaughlan, 31, who have been accused of murdering in December an Australian colleague Yvonne Gilford, 55, at a Saudi hospital complex where they worked.

If found guilty, they could be publicly beheaded by the sword. Legal sources say it would be the first time Western women have been beheaded in the kingdom.

"The office of Salah Al Hujailan, received the report which the forensic pathologist prepared on the crime," the Saudi-owned daily Al Sharq Al Awsat said.

"The office will receive the final Saudi police report about the crime within a few short days," it added, quoting an interview with the lawyer.

The women chose Mr. Hujailan, a prominent Saudi attorney educated in Cairo and the United States, as their defence lawyer on Dec. 30, 10 days after being charged with murdering Gilford at the King Fahd Military Medical Complex in Dhahran, eastern Saudi Arabia.

The Australian nurse was found murdered in her dormitory room at the hospital on Dec. 11. She had been stabbed, bludgeoned with a hammer and suffocated.

In accordance with Saudi law, there will be no prosecution lawyer at the trial, only the police report with a judge handling the rest of the prosecution case. No date for the hearing has been announced.

If found guilty and sentenced to death, Gilford's family could still spare the lives of the women by accepting blood money instead of execution.

But Gilford's family in Australia have ruled out a clemency appeal, saying the two should face the maximum punishment.

According to Monday's Al Eqtisadiyah daily, Mr. Hujailan said the victim's family still insisted on the death penalty, but added he hoped they would change their mind after the police reports had been revealed.

Miyet named U.N. peace

PARIS (AFP) — U.N. Secretary-General Boutros Boutros-Ghali has named French diplomat Henriette Miya as his special representative for the Middle East peacekeeping operations, the French newspaper Le Monde said Tuesday. Miya, 50, will be based in Geneva and will be in charge of the U.N. Truce Supervision Organisation (TSO) in the Golan Heights. She will be in charge of the U.N. Truce Supervision Organisation (TSO) in the Golan Heights. She will be in charge of the U.N. Truce Supervision Organisation (TSO) in the Golan Heights.

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